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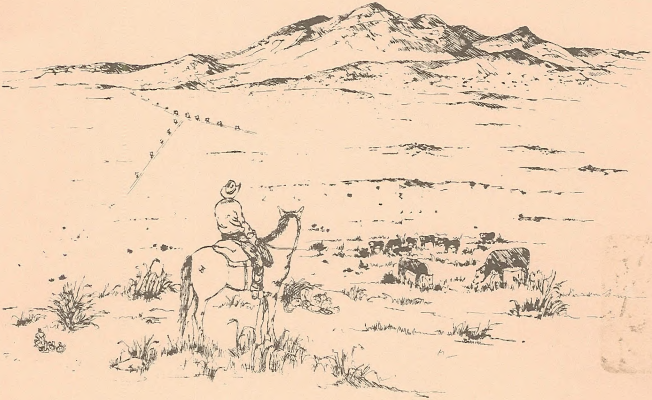
FINAL Environmental Impact Statement



WEST SOCORRO Rangeland Management Program

U. S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Socorro District Office
San Augustine Resource Area

September 1982

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1982b

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

District Office
P.O. Box 1219
Socorro, NM 87801

IN REPLY REFER TO
1792
West Socorro EIS

Please find enclosed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program for the Divide Planning Area (DPA) located in Catron, Cibola, Socorro, and Valencia Counties, New Mexico. The Proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program EIS analyzes the effects of this program, as well as three other alternatives.

This Final EIS was prepared using comments received through the public review process on the Draft EIS. Because the changes identified in the public review process did not necessitate a major revision of the Draft EIS and substantial cost savings could be realized by reprinting only the response to comments received and additions and modifications, the Draft EIS has been incorporated into this Final EIS by reference.

This Final EIS includes a summary of the Draft EIS, a reiteration of all of Chapter IV to emphasize the consultation, cooperation, and coordination that occurred during development of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Planning Documents for the DPA and the Draft EIS, a record of public comment on the Draft EIS and BLM responses to those comments, and changes to the Draft EIS resulting from public review and comment. Therefore, the Draft EIS, which was distributed to the public in early May, 1982, and this volume together constitute the complete Final EIS. A limited number of copies of the Draft EIS are still available at the above address.

The Final EIS is not the decision document for the Proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program. The decision on any action to be taken will be based on the results of the analyses contained in the Draft and Final EIS's, and public concerns and comments. By December 1, 1982, following filing of this Final EIS with the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, a Record of Decision will be published outlining the BLM Socorro District Manager's final decision for rangeland management.

We appreciate the time that agencies, organizations, and individuals have expended during preparation and review of the DPA, Multiple Land-Use Plan and the Proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program Draft EIS. The time you have afforded us will assist us in managing public lands of the DPA for optimum multiple land-use resource production on a sustained yield basis and for protecting sensitive resource use values.

Sincerely,

Paul W. Tanner
Area Manager
San Augustine Resource Area

Enclosure

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FINAL

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

for the

PROPOSED WEST SOCORRO RANGELAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Catron, Cibola, Socorro and Valencia Counties, New Mexico

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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Charles W. Luscher

Charles W. Luscher
State Director, New Mexico

Abstract: The Bureau of Land Management, Socorro District Office, proposes to implement a rangeland management program for the Divide Planning Area located in Catron, Cibola, Valencia, and Socorro Counties in west-central New Mexico. This rangeland management program would implement specific management actions on 187 grazing allotments within six management categories. This program is designed to improve and maintain rangeland condition on 986,092 acres of public land in order to enhance vegetative resources. This program would also provide a sustained yield of livestock forage, quality habitat for wildlife, reduce soil erosion and improve water quality. Three alternatives - No Action, Elimination of Livestock Grazing, and Maximization of Livestock Forage Production are analyzed in conjunction with the Preferred Alternative. A discussion of the affected environment is included, and the environmental consequences which would result from implementation of the Preferred Alternative and other alternatives are analyzed in this Environmental Impact Statement.

For Further Information Contact: Glenn Sekavec, EIS Staff Leader, BLM, Socorro District Office, P.O. Box 1219, Socorro, New Mexico 87801 or Call (505) 835-0412.

Type of Action: (X) Administrative ( ) Legislative

Comments have been requested from: See Chapter IV

Date Filed with EPA

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SUMMARY

Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Socorro District Office, proposes to implement a rangeland management program on 986,092 acres of public land administered by BLM within the Divide Planning Area (DPA) of the San Augustine Resource Area. A Preferred Alternative and three other alternatives have been developed to improve rangeland management in the DPA. The purpose of the Preferred Alternative is to protect and enhance the soil and vegetative resources of the DPA which provide the foundation for livestock forage, watershed, wildlife habitat, recreation and aesthetics, and commensurate social and economic values.

Description of the Alternatives Including the Preferred Alternative

Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative)

The Preferred Alternative was formulated in conjunction with development of the BLM DPA multiple land-use plan. All 187 grazing allotments within the DPA were evaluated and assigned an average allotment range condition. Each allotment was then placed within one of six management categories depending on range condition and acreage of public land within the allotment. Each of the six management categories possesses inherent management actions based on livestock grazing/management principles. These include season-of-use, distribution of domestic livestock, kind and class of livestock, and numbers of livestock. Each of these management actions has been listed in a priority sequence within each management category. Some management actions would be required during implementation and others would be optional.

Based on the management category in which an allotment has been placed, the BLM Socorro District would implement, at a minimum, those required management actions and possibly optional management actions on all 187 grazing allotments within the DPA. Implementation of management actions by allotment management category would be conducted in conjunction with "careful and considered consultation, cooperation and coordination with the lessees, permittees, and landowners involved..." as required by Section 8 of the Public Rangelands Improvement Act.

In addition, construction of rangeland improvements and vegetative land treatments would be required to implement Alternative 1. These would include, at a minimum, the construction of 47 miles of fence, 65 miles of pipeline, 10 wells, and 27 pit tanks. Vegetative land treatments would be conducted on an estimated maximum 353,320 acres of public land within the DPA. These treatments include mechanical work, herbicide application, and prescribed burning to control pinyon-juniper and rabbitbrush encroachment on a maximum of 299,560 acres; pitting, contour ripping, and contour furrowing on 17,280 acres; and seeding or interseeding 36,480 acres of BLM administered public land within the DPA.

Monitoring of the Preferred Alternative would be conducted to determine the effectiveness of implementing management actions by management category, rangeland improvements and vegetative land treatments. Wildlife habitat monitoring studies would also be simultaneously conducted either annually or biannually to determine wildlife habitat condition, trend, utilization of various habitats and distribution and movement of certain wildlife species.

Alternative 2 (No Action)

Alternative 2 would be the continuation of the current BLM Socorro District rangeland management program. The existing 13 allotments within the DPA with developed Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) and the one Experimental Stewardship Plan (ESP) would continue operation with revisions made, if necessary, based on the results of the monitoring studies. The remaining 173 allotments within the DPA would not be intensively managed. Existing rangeland improvements would be maintained; however, BLM would not construct any new projects except on allotments with existing AMPs or the ESP. Wildlife, watershed, and other resource use improvements would continue to be constructed under current procedures. Livestock operator-built rangeland improvements would be processed under permits as at present.

Alternative 3 (Elimination of Livestock Grazing)

In Alternative 3, all domestic livestock grazing on 986,092 acres of public land administered by BLM within the DPA would be discontinued. No grazing authorizations would be issued and no AMPs would be developed. To ensure that domestic livestock were not grazed on public lands, an estimated 2,554 miles of fence would need to be constructed by the private landowner or State land lessee. The range management program within the DPA would be limited to trespass detection and the processing of trespass cases. No new rangeland improvements would be constructed, and those existing improvements would be maintained by BLM only if required for other resource uses (such as wildlife) and would otherwise be removed.

Alternative 4 (Maximization of Livestock Forage Production)

In Alternative 4, intensive management would be provided on all allotments within the DPA. AMPs would be developed on those 173 allotments currently without such.

In addition to total allotment management, vegetative land treatments would be conducted on an estimated maximum of 545,815 acres of public land. These treatments include controlling pinyon-juniper on 58,238 acres of public land, discing and interseeding 56,159 acres, pitting, ripping, and furrowing 26,746 acres, controlled burning of 363,335 acres, and chemically treating 41,337 acres of public land. Rangeland improvements would be constructed; however, the type, number, and location of these projects are unknown at this time. Project types would be developed simultaneously with the development of AMPs. Rangeland and wildlife habitat monitoring studies would also be conducted to continually assess the effects of total intensive management, vegetative land treatments, and rangeland improvements.

Environmental Consequences of the Alternatives Including the Preferred Alternative

Site-specific Environmental Assessments (EAs) and those Standard Operating Procedures described in Chapter I would mitigate the impacts on Cultural Resources (Alternatives 1, 2, and 4) and Visual Resources. No actions would be taken that would impair wilderness values in designated Wilderness Study Areas. Therefore, these resources are not discussed in detail in this section.

For analysis purposes in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), short-term impacts are defined as those impacts to the environment that would occur, as the result of implementing any of the alternatives under consideration, through the year 1989. Long-term impacts are those impacts that would occur through the year 2000. Table S-1 illustrates the comparison of impacts of the Preferred Alternative and other alternatives under consideration.

Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative)

In Alternative 1 there would be minimal, localized, short-duration impacts on air quality in the form of smoke generation and fugitive dust.

Sediment yields would be reduced approximately 8 percent in the long term, but would increase slightly in the short term on areas receiving vegetative land treatments. In the short term, wind erosion would increase slightly in areas where vegetation is removed or disturbed; however, in the long term, wind erosion would decrease as vegetation is reestablished.

Water runoff would decrease 7 to 23 percent depending upon ground cover, slope, soil type and vegetative type within each watershed. Minor, temporary runoff increases would result from the construction of rangeland improvements but would end with the reestablishment of permanent vegetative ground cover. Water consumption by livestock and big game would increase 21 percent by the year 2000.

In the short term as well as the long term, there would be increases in cover and production of desirable and intermediate forage species.

The diversity of small mammals and summer birds would vary according to the Standard Habitat Site (SHS). Generally speaking, the diversity of small mammals would decrease while the diversity of summer birds would increase.

Deer and antelope numbers would increase from 2,200 and 600 to 4,500 and 1,600, respectively. Wintering elk numbers would increase to 100 animals in the long term.

Federally listed endangered species would not be affected by the Preferred Alternative. Baird's sparrow (State Listed: Endangered, Group II) would benefit through the increased availability of grass seed.

TABLE S-I

COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES

Resource	Existing	Preferred Alternative		No Action Alternative		Elimination of Grzg.		Maximization Lvstck. Forage Prod.	
		Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
Physical Setting	Stable	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS
Vegetation									
Pounds of Air Dry Matter in Current Years Production (Millions of Pounds)	253.8	309.6	403.2	257.0	261.0	340.2	486.0	340.2	486.0
Ecological Condition Class (Acres)1/									
Excellent	1,892	33,669	86,664	4,991	9,905	34,519	91,519	65,293	168,123
Good	441,436	468,756	493,847	441,557	449,252	494,860	541,627	464,086	465,152
Fair	446,859	390,462	315,070	440,947	431,801	363,507	262,306	363,507	262,306
Poor	8,948	6,249	3,554	8,639	8,176	6,249	3,554	6,249	3,554
Soils									
Percent Change in Sediment Yield	<0.2 Ac. Ft./mi^2/ Yr. class2/ (Stable)	+3	-8	0	0	0	-11	+4	-5
Wildlife (Numbers)									
Deer	2,200	2,200	4,500	2,200	2,200	2,200	4,500	2,200	4,500
Antelope	600	600	1,600	600	600	600	1,600	600	1,600
Elk	5	5	100	5	5	5	100	5	100
Wildlife AUMs	3,759	4,758	9,949	4,758	4,758	3/	3/	4,758	9,949
Estimated Overall Change in Standard Habitat Sites	E	NS+	NQ+	NC	NC	NQ+	NQ+	NQ+	NQ+
Livestock Grazing/Mgmt.									
No. of Livestock Operators	156	156	156	156	156	0	0	156	156
Domestic Livestock Forage Allocation (AUMs)	141,600	157,000	178,200	143,000	145,000	0	0	186,000	250,000
Water Resources									
Water Use (Ac. ft./Yr.)	2,369	2,890	3,764	2,400	2,436	0	0	3,176	4,537
Decrease in Runoff (%)	NC	NC	21	NC	NC	NC	19	NC	13

TABLE S-I (continued)

COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE ALTERNATIVES

Resource	Existing	Preferred Alternative Short Term	Preferred Alternative Long Term	No Action Alternative Short Term	No Action Alternative Long Term	Elimination of Grzg. Short Term	Elimination of Grzg. Long Term	Maximization Lvstck. Forage Prod. Short Term	Maximization Lvstck. Forage Prod. Long Term
Air Quality	Stable	Local Dust Increase	NC	NC	NC	Dust Decrease	Dust Decrease	Local Dust Increase	NC
Cultural Resources	NK	NQ	NQ	NQ	NQ	+	+	NQ	NQ
Visual Resources	Stable	NS-	NS+	NC	NC	NS+	NS+	NS-	NS
Wilderness	Stable	NS-	NS-	NS-	NS-	NS+	NS+	NS-	NS-
Recreation									
Deer Hunting (Visitor Days)	4,164	4,180	8,550	4,180	4,180	4,180	8,550	4,180	8,550
Social Conditions	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Economic Condjtions ($)									
Livestock Sales	8,637,870	8,800,348	9,023,464	8,652,813	8,673,717	7,169,432	7,169,432	9,103,710	9,768,567
Cash Costs	3,373,272	3,436,723	3,523,854	3,379,107	3,387,271	2,799,815	2,799,815	3,555,192	3,814,833
Net Cash Sales	5,264,598	5,363,625	5,499,610	5,273,706	5,286,446	4,369,617	4,369,617	5,548,518	5,953,734
Depreciation	1,007,274	1,026,220	1,052,238	1,009,016	1,011,454	836,037	836,037	1,061,596	1,139,126
SUBTOTAL NET INCOME -	4,257,324	4,337,405	4,447,372	4,264,690	4,274,992	3,533,580	3,533,580	4,486,922	4,814,608
Other Costs	3,561,918	3,628,917	3,720,922	3,568,080	3,576,699	2,956,391	2,956,391	3,754,012	4,028,173
TOTAL NET INCOME -	695,406	708,488	726,450	696,610	698,293	577,189	577,189	732,910	786,435
Mule Deer Visitor Day Direct Income Value	313,549	314,754	1,037,799	314,754	504,368	314,754	1,037,799	314,754	1,037,799

1/ Resultant from implementing management actions (does not include vegetative land treatments).

2/ The existing weighted average value for sediment yield is actually borderline to the slight class (0.2 - 0.5 acre-feet per square mile per year).

3/ All forage available for wildlife.

NK Not Known
NQ Non-Quantifiable
NS Not Significant
NC No Change from Existing (Changes Not Quantifiable)
E Existing Value
I Increased Value
+ Beneficial
- Adverse
* See Table III-7 for Assessment of Social Change by Alternative.

Short-term/Long-term (see Glossary or Chapter III for definition).

Source: BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS Files.

Anticipated domestic livestock forage allocation would increase from the current level of 141,600 AUMs to 178,200 AUMs by the year 2000; this would meet the anticipated demand for AUMs produced on public land. The Preferred Alternative would increase big game allocation from the current required level of 4,758 to 9,949 AUMs by the year 2000. This increase in AUMs would provide all forage necessary to sustain big game numbers within the DPA.

Some damage to cultural resources would continue because of livestock trampling, but site-specificity difficulties inherent in assessing damage to archaeological resources preclude exact evaluation of losses. Impacts to known resources or resources discovered during resource clearances of rangeland improvements or vegetative land treatments would be mitigated or prevented prior to conducting such projects on a site-specific basis.

As vegetative cover increases on rangelands, visual quality and variety would improve.

With the improvement of wildlife habitat, hunting would improve. Increases in regional population would be expected to create additional deer hunting pressure. Deer hunting visitor days would increase from the current level of 4,164 to approximately 8,550 by the year 2000.

The existing social environment and the quality of life conditions would be maintained and, in the long term, would gradually be improved. This alternative would ensure continuance of ranching as a life-style, the stability of the family institution, and the community structure would be enhanced. As management actions were taken, the aesthetic values of the environment would be increased through improved range conditions and maintenance of wildlife habitat; the recreational opportunities would be increased as the result.

Livestock operators' personal income would increase under the Preferred Alternative. Their ability to borrow money using their authorized grazing use on Federal lands as collateral would also increase.

Alternative 2 (No Action)

Air quality impacts, consisting of smoke and fugitive dust generation, would be minimal, localized, and of short duration.

Sediment yields and wind erosion susceptibility would not measurably change from present existing conditions.

There would be little or no change in vegetative cover or in production of all plant species.

Small mammal and summer bird diversity would remain stable within the DPA. Big game populations would remain stable but at a level far below optimum numbers. Very little change from current condition would occur to wildlife habitat (Table III-5).

In the No Action Alternative, domestic livestock forage allocation would increase at an estimated constant rate of 200 AUMs per year from the current level of 141,600 AUMs to 145,000 AUMs by the year 2000. Forage allocation to wildlife would remain constant at the current level of 4,758 AUMs throughout the year 2000. Federal grazing preference would remain at 153,406 AUMs. Fourteen allotments would continue to be intensively managed under AMPs and an ESP while the remaining 173 allotments would not be intensively managed.

Some minor damage to cultural resources, because of livestock trampling, would continue at the present rate.

Deer hunting visitor days would remain near the present level of 4,164.

The social environment and the quality of life conditions would change very little. The life-styles, the family institution, and the community structure would remain much the same.

Management actions for the increase of wildlife would be conducted solely in conjunction with the wildlife program. The opportunities for recreational experience, aesthetic viewing and existence values would not change, but demand would continue to increase in proportion to population growth.

Established economic trends would continue in Alternative 2. Any changes that would occur would not be due to factors related to Alternative 2.

Alternative 3 (Elimination of Livestock Grazing)

Smoke and fugitive dust would have minimal, short-duration impacts on localized portions of the DPA.

There would be an 11-percent decrease in sediment yield in the long term. Wind erosion susceptibility would also decrease in the long term. In the short term, there would not be any significant change in sediment yield or wind erosion susceptibility.

Water runoff would be decreased as much as 19 percent depending upon cover, slope, etc. Consumptive use of water by livestock would cease, making an additional 2,379 acre-feet of water available on public lands for other uses.

Vigor and production of rangeland forage plants would improve.

There would be no competition between livestock and wildlife for forage. Small mammal and summer bird diversities would tend toward those present in a climax vegetative community. Big game numbers would reach optimum numbers faster than under Alternative 1. Eliminating livestock grazing would allow grasses to seed out which would in turn benefit the State Endangered (Group II) Baird's sparrow.

All of the 141,600 AUMs presently allocated to livestock use would no longer be available for that purpose. However, all forage allocation would be reserved for other resource uses. All existing rangeland improvements not used for wildlife or other purposes would be removed.

Damage to cultural resources due to livestock trampling would cease. Ongoing historical development as well as the major life-style of the DPA would be, in part, destroyed.

With increases in vegetative cover and production, visual variety, and therefore quality, would also improve.

Alternative 3 would not significantly increase non-hunting recreational opportunities; however, removal of rangeland improvements, that serve no other purpose, and cattle would eliminate existing and potential conflicts between recreational users and livestock operators. Cross-country vehicular access would improve with the removal of fences. This improved cross-country access would be offset, by reduced levels of maintenance on the existing ranch access roads. This would reduce access for all recreational activities. Deer hunting visitor days would increase to approximately 8,550, an increase of 4,386 visitor days over the current level of use.

The social environment and the quality of life would undergo major changes with the elimination of livestock grazing. Sixty-two percent of the livestock operators would have to cease their operations and find employment elsewhere. Most of them would have to compete for jobs in an area already characterized by a higher than State average unemployment rate. Some villages and towns would experience additional demands on an already strained infrastructure.

Income loss would lessen the quality of life of livestock operators as well as businessmen of the area. The DPA is already below the State average in amount of per capita income and median family income.

The stability of the family and community would be altered through spatial movement, uncertainty and anxiety, and changes in the patterns of social interaction.

There would be additional demands upon the infrastructure with the need of additional police, increased public social services and increased urban school population.

Elimination of livestock grazing would have adverse economic effects. Net revenues to all livestock operators using public land would decrease. Livestock operators would be forced to sell their livestock or supplemental feed or graze on private or State lands. Their continued operation would depend upon their prior level of dependency on public lands for grazing and their ability to meet all cash costs after individual adjustments in levels of grazing.

Alternative 4 (Maximization of Livestock Forage Production)

In Alternative 4, there would be minimal, localized, short-duration impacts on the air quality in the form of smoke generation and fugitive dust.

Sediment yields would be reduced approximately 5 percent in the long term. In the short term, there would be an approximate 4-percent increase in sediment yield. Wind erosion susceptibility would increase slightly in the short term in areas where the vegetation is temporarily removed or disturbed. In the long term, as vegetation is reestablished, wind erosion susceptibility would decrease.

Water runoff would decrease 10 to 16 percent depending on cover, etc. Water consumption by livestock and big game would increase 44 percent in the long term.

In the short and long terms, there would be increases in cover and production of desirable and intermediate forage species.

Within the DPA, small mammal diversity would decrease and summer bird diversity would increase. Deer, antelope and elk numbers would increase to 4,500, 1,600, and 100, respectively. Baird's sparrow would benefit from Alternative 4.

AMPs would be developed on 173 allotments and implemented on all allotments. Vegetative land treatments would be performed on an estimated maximum 545,815 acres. Anticipated domestic livestock forage allocation would increase from the current level of 141,600 AUMs to the full DPA potential of 250,000 AUMs by the year 2000. Initial and future forage allocations to big game populations would be 4,758 AUMs and 9,949 AUMs, respectively. This big game allocation would be adequate to sustain those numbers of animals capable of being produced within the DPA.

Damages to cultural resources would continue because of livestock trampling, but difficulties inherent in assessing potential site-specific damage to archaeological resources preclude exact evaluation of losses.

An increase in the number of rangeland improvements, vegetative land treatments, and resulting domestic livestock would increase the potential conflicts between recreational users and livestock operators. Rangeland improvements and vegetative land treatments located near existing and proposed recreation sites would further increase these potential conflicts which would be greatest along the proposed route of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (the final trail location is unknown at this time).

It is expected that off-road vehicle (ORV) use of areas subject to vegetative land treatment would be restricted while the new vegetation responds, temporarily reducing overall ORV opportunities and reducing recreational access to affected areas. Recreational access would also be restricted by the construction of new fences.

Deer hunting visitor days would increase to approximately 8,550. This represents an increase of 4,386 over the current use level.

The social environment would change very little except for a small increase in population. The quality of life would be enhanced by an increase in income which would provide the opportunity for greater accessibility to goods and services, a decrease in the demand for public services, and a lower unemployment rate. The life-styles of the livestock operators would continue as would the stability of the family and the community structure. Existing patterns of social interaction would continue.

The increased grazing capacities resulting from Alternative 4 would increase the income of the livestock operators and add to the overall well-being of the general economy of the DPA.

CHAPTER IV

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

INTRODUCTION

This Chapter presents the consultation, coordination, and public involvement which was conducted during preparation of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) planning documents for the Divide Planning Area (DPA), the Preferred Alternative and the other three alternatives under consideration and the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A list of persons involved in the preparation of this EIS is provided in the Team Organization section.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (90 Stat. 2743; 43 U.S.C. 1701-1771) requires, in part, the Secretary of the Interior to prepare and maintain land-use plans on public lands administered by BLM. BLM requires (BLM Manual 1601 - Planning System) that, during the preparation of these land-use planning documents, public participation plans be developed and public input and opinion utilized in the decision making process. A public participation plan was developed for the DPA and this plan is available for public review in the BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS files.

During the development of the DPA planning documents described in Chapter I and Appendix E, the BLM Planning System was presented to the public at meetings, in news releases, and in various publications. Also, many individual contacts were made via telephone, letters, and informal meetings. At the same time, the public was given the opportunity to contribute their knowledge, ideas and proposals regarding the many resources and resource uses in the DPA.

Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) require "an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action." To ensure implementation of these Regulations, the BLM Socorro District Office has continued coordination with various Federal, State, local agencies, and interested persons to gather information and identify issues pertaining to the DPA.

The following listing is representative, but not all-inclusive, of the contacts made during the development of the DPA multiple land-use plan, the Preferred Alternative and other alternatives under consideration, and the EIS scoping process (BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS Files).

August 22, 1978 - The public was invited to attend an informational meeting to discuss development of the forthcoming multiple land-use plan for the DPA.

Fall 1978-79 - The BLM Socorro District range survey was initiated. Livestock operators were contacted to explain what the vegetative survey typing crew was doing. Livestock operators were invited to accompany the crew while they conducted study transects.

October 4, 1979; October 24, 1979 and April 2, 1980 - Letters were sent to all DPA livestock operators to solicit their comprehensive allotment needs.

December 19, 1979 - Letters were sent to all County Commissioners and City Managers within the DPA informing them that BLM was conducting an inventory of existing public purpose areas and assessing the need for public land as future public purpose sites.

January 29, 1980 - Letters were sent to all DPA livestock operators to request information regarding the May Beetle infestation and the extent of damage it had caused.

February 1980 - Letters were sent to an extensive list of public land users inquiring about the amount and kind of recreational activity they conduct in the DPA. Responses indicated rather minor recreational use of the DPA. Issues were raised, however, regarding visitor use including vehicles destroying fences, lack of BLM signs, small and limited numbers of woodcutting areas, and lack of campgrounds.

March 25, 1980 - BLM representatives attended a County Commissioners' meeting in Grants, New Mexico to explain the BLM planning process and solicit comment regarding the DPA plan.

April 1, 1980 - BLM representatives attended a County Commissioners' meeting in Reserve, New Mexico to explain the BLM planning process and solicit comment regarding the DPA plan.

May 1980 - Letters were sent to various utility companies requesting information regarding their power and pipeline routes and the need for public land as future utility corridors.

September 5, 1980 - A synopsis of the BLM Planning System was presented to the Socorro District Multiple-Use Advisory Council, along with copies of the Unit Resource Analysis (URA) and the Management Framework Plan (MFP) Step 1. Comments regarding these planning documents were solicited.

October 14, 1980 - A BLM representative met with the Tularosa Basin Rock Hounds to discuss the DPA URA and MFP and the Stallion-Ladron off-road vehicle (ORV) designations. The group indicated opposition to ORV closures but were in favor of restricted areas.

January 12, 1981 - A letter was sent to all of the County Commissioners, the Councils of Government (COG), the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Area Councils, and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) within the DPA informing them of the status of the DPA planning effort and to solicit comment.

February 26, 1981 - A meeting was held with the Southwest New Mexico RC&D Area Council to explain the BLM Planning System, the status of the Divide MFP, Step 1, and to solicit comment. Representatives of the Southwest New Mexico COG and the Jornada RC&D Area Council were also present.

March 9, 1981 - A meeting was held with the Middle Rio Grande COG to explain the BLM Planning System, the status of the Divide MFP, Step 1, and to solicit comment.

March 9, 1981 and May 5, 1981 - A meeting was held with the HUB RC&D Area Council to explain the BLM Planning System, the status of the Divide MFP, Step 1, and to solicit comment.

Meetings were held in Socorro on March 30, 1981; Albuquerque on March 31, 1981; Grants on April 2, 1981; Datil on April 7, 1981; Quemado on April 7, 1981; and in Springerville, Arizona on April 24, 1981; to discuss development of the DPA MFP and to solicit comment.

April 1981 - A brochure which described the objectives formulated for multiple-use land management within the MFP for the DPA was disseminated to all County Commissioners, COGs, RC&D Area Councils, SWCDs within the DPA, the BLM Socorro District Grazing Advisory Board, and the BLM Socorro District Multiple-Use Advisory Council. Comments were solicited regarding the objectives.

May 8, 1981 - A meeting was held with the Middle Rio Grande COG to explain the BLM Planning System, the status of the Divide MFP, Step 1, and to solicit comment.

May 13, 1981 - A BLM representative met with the Southern Rio Grande COG to explain the above mentioned Divide MFP Brochure and to solicit comment.

May 13, 1981 - A BLM representative met with the Jornada RC&D Area Council to explain the DPA MFP Brochure and to solicit comment.

May 14, 1981 - A BLM representative met with the Southwest New Mexico COG to explain the DPA MFP Brochure and to solicit comment.

June 2, 1981 - Several BLM representatives met with the HUB RC&D Area Council to discuss the DPA MFP Brochure and to solicit comment. The Council, in a letter dated July 10, 1981, requested that the DPA plan provide methods to reduce soil erosion to protect forest resources and to prevent abuse of public lands. The Council supports efforts to make public land contiguous throughout the DPA through various means and then to preserve public land in as natural a state as possible. The Council however, also requested that the plan provide for all multiple-use purposes, including livestock grazing.

June 4, 1981 - BLM representatives presented a synopsis of the BLM planning process for the DPA and solicited input on the MFP Brochure from the Board of Directors, Middle Rio Grande COG.

During the spring of 1978 through 1981, numerous individual contacts were also made with representatives of various interests to obtain information regarding resources and resource uses of the DPA. These contacts were documented on BLM Form 1600-16, "Record of Public Participation in the Planning Process," and are available for review in the BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS files.

During the formulation of the Range Management URA and MFP 1 (Preferred Alternative), BLM specialists requested input from the Socorro District Grazing Advisory Board, Range Improvement Task Force, Socorro District

Multiple-Use Advisory Council, Southwest Region of the Sierra Club, New Mexico State Land Office, New Mexico State Department of Agriculture, all livestock operators within the DPA, and many individuals.

April 24, 1981 and July 20, 1981 - The Socorro District Grazing Advisory Board met and members expressed that they were in favor of flexibility regarding the salt and/or supplement recommendation included in the Preferred Alternative. The Board also felt that rest periods should not be too restrictive and wanted to add the construction of range improvements to allotments in Management Category F. They also wanted to add the words "common sense" to the proposed method of implementation. The Board also felt that the method for determining livestock grazing capacity should not be limited to the 13- to 14-year average past licensed use.

April 24, 1981 - The Range Improvement Task Force informally expressed that they favored flexibility regarding the salt and/or supplement recommendation and rest periods.

August 26, 1981 - A meeting was held in Datil, New Mexico at the request of the Socorro District Grazing Advisory Board and the West Central Grazing Permittees Association so BLM could explain the Preferred Alternative and other alternatives under consideration to the DPA livestock operators. There were approximately 30 livestock operators present and one representative from the New Mexico Department of Agriculture. The livestock operators expressed that they were displeased with problems encountered with implementing the East Socorro Grazing EIS. They expressed interest in the Preferred Alternative and asked for clarification. In general, they felt the new proposal was an improvement over past operating procedures.

The formal scoping process began in late Spring of 1981 and included meetings, a Federal Register notice, and news releases. These are listed below along with the major issues and concerns that were discussed during the formal scoping meetings.

August 23-24, 1981 - News releases were issued to various New Mexico newspapers; e.g., Albuquerque Journal, Socorro Defensor Chieftain, etc., and several other media which announced the preparation of the EIS on the DPA.

August 27, 1981 - A notice was published in the Federal Register (Vol. 46, No. 166, p. 43316) announcing preparation of the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program EIS.

September 8, 1981 - A notice was sent to the public (see Public Review of the EIS) explaining the EIS alternatives under consideration and inviting them to public scoping meetings, scheduled in Magdalena, Grants, Quemado, and Albuquerque, New Mexico. Comments regarding development of the EIS were also requested.

September 8, 1981 - Announcements regarding the scoping meetings were sent to all newspapers and other media within the DPA.

September 21, 1981 - A meeting was held at the Magdalena City Hall. Five members of the public attended this scoping meeting. Those in attendance were in agreement with the Preferred Alternative. One person stated, "It was better than the approach used 2 years ago." The major concern raised was the involvement of livestock operators in the consultation process.

September 23, 1981 - A meeting was held in Grants, New Mexico. Eight people were in attendance. General concerns included: Conducting range studies over a period of years, restricting livestock grazing due to wilderness designation in El Malpais, and spraying of problem forbs. It was the consensus of the attendees that the Preferred Alternative for the EIS was basically good. In addition, livestock operators wanted to be consulted with but not dictated to, and they wanted BLM/livestock operator cooperation in establishing a working relationship.

September 24, 1981 - A meeting was held in Quemado, New Mexico. Six people were present. The primary issue raised was that should an allotment be identified as needing an adjustment in livestock numbers, it would be difficult to find a level for agreement. The public felt the livestock operator would probably want to use the highest figure while BLM would probably want to use the lowest. Another issue of concern was the method of disposal for certain isolated tracts of land located in El Malpais. Livestock operators wanted first priority should the land be offered for exchange or sale. It was the general consensus that the Preferred Alternative was far superior to any other BLM District EIS proposal.

October 7, 1981 - A meeting was held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Two members of the public attended. Both individuals reacted favorably to the Preferred Alternative. They liked the provisions for individual allotment variation and flexibility, and for assessing allotments from the worst to the best condition order; they felt it was a practical approach. They also approved of BLM considering economic impacts and trend.

OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

No additional alternatives were identified and no alternatives have been dropped from consideration during the planning or scoping processes for this EIS.

PUBLIC REVIEW OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The Draft EIS was sent to and comments requested from the following computerized list of agencies, interest groups, and individuals.

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		MR JAMES HEAP	
		MR JIM PATTERSON	
		MR JOHN BENTON	
			GOESLING
			HAND
			HUNING
		MR JOHN R SAIS	
		MR MICHEL HARRIET JR	
		MR NEWTON NEAL & SONS	
		MR ORVILLE MOORE	
		MR PAT LEARY	
		MR PATRICIO SANCHEZ	
		MR PETE BACA JR	
		MR PIERRE ARROSA	
		MR R H DEAN	
		MR R L CHILTON	
		MR RANDOLPH JENKS	
		MR RAY AUGE	
		MR ROBERT HOOPER	
		MR ROBERT L MORRISS	
		MR RULON E BIGELOW	
		MR SAM J PADILLA	
		MR TERRY HICKS	
		MR TOMAS A CASTILLO	
		MR TRINIDAD GARCIA	
		MR TRUMAN V HATLEY	
		MR VIRGIL O RHODES	
		MR WILFRED E BINNS	
		MR WILLIAM RIENHARDT	
		MRS VIRGINIA LONG	
		MS BRENDA ARROSA	
		MS HATTIE LACY	
		MS MARGARET C SANCHEZ	
		MS RUTH RIVERA LUCERO	
		NELLIE SUMMERS ET AL	
		R H AND P E MEADOW	
	AMER HORSE PROT ASSOC		
	ARY BROTHERS	MR WAYNE ARY	
	FARR CATTLE CO	MR DAVE FARR	
	FED LAND BANK OF ALBUQUERQUE		
	FED LAND BANK OF LAS CRUCES		
	FED LAND BANK OF ROSWELL		
	FED LAND BANK OF TUCUMCARI		
	FOUR CORNERS WILDERNESS WORKSH		
	FRANK A HUBBELL CO		
	GALLACHER RANCHES	MR WM GALLACHER JR	
	HARVEY INV CO	MR E P HARVEY	
	HISTORIC PRESERVATION BUR	MR THOMAS WM MERLAN	
	J N BACA ESTATE	MS CECELIA BURTON	
	JMJ CATTLE CO	MR JAMES M JACKSON	

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	MONTOSA CATTLE CO	MR PETE EVANS
	MT STATES TEL & TEL CO	BUILDINGS & REAL ESTATE
	NM CATTLE GROWERS ASSOC	EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
	NM FARM & LIVESTOCK BUR	
	NM STATE LAND OFFICE	MR EDDIE H ORTIZ
	NMSU, EXTENSION SERVICE	DR JERRY G SCHICKEDANZ
	PUBLIC LANDS COUNCIL	MR RONALD A MICHIELI
	PUEBLO OF ACOMA	GOVERNOR OF ACOMA
	RANCHO ALEGRE CATTLE CO	
	SIERRA COUNTY SWCD	
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	SUNBELT RANCHES INC	MR JACK A RICHEY
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	XAIDEE BAUM	MR & MRS J R HOGG
RES INT ROW USER		MR AUDILIO MIRANDA
		MR G W BURRIS
		MR GENE A BACA
		MR HILARIO GUTIERREZ
		MR JAMES HEAP
		MR RULON E BIGELOW
		MR SAM J PADILLA
	AT & T	RIGHT OF WAY DEPARTMENT
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	NM & AZ LAND CO	
	PLAINS ELECTRIC	MR DAVID USSERY
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	PUBLIC SERVICE CO OF NM	ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
		MR JIM WILKERSON
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		MR FRED RICHTER
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		MR HAROLD WALLING
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		MR JOHN R SAIS
		MRS MYRA MCCORMICK
	NATIVE AMERICAN RES LIBRARY	
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		COMMANDER, STEW FE EM
		FLETCHER & LUCILLE TIGNER
		MR DON H BAKER,JR AND ASSOC, INC
		MR FRED RICHTER
		MR G W BURRIS
		MR GENE A BACA
		MR HAROLD WALLING
		MR JACK BALOK
		MR JAMES HEAP
		MR JAY PATTERSON
		MR MICHEL HARRIET JR
		MR RAY AUGE
		MR WILLIAM RIENHARDT
	AMERICAN WILDERNESS ALLIANCE	
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	FOUR CORNERS WILDERNESS WORKSH	
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	J N BACA ESTATE	C/O CECELIA BURTON
	NATIVE AMERICAN RES LIBRARY	
	NM CATTLE GROWERS ASSOC	EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
	NM TRAPPERS ASSOC	MR VICTOR GARCIA, PRESIDENT
	RANCHO ALEGRE CATTLE CO	
	RESOURCE ASSOC OF ALASKA	
	SHELL OIL COMPANY	LAND DIVISION
	SIERRA COUNTY SWCD	
LIBRARIES	ALBUQUERQUE CITY LIBRARY	MAIN OFFICE
	BRANIGON THOMAS MEMORIAL LIB	
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	NMIMT	UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
	NMSU	UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
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	SANTA FE PUBLIC LIBRARY	
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INTERESTED CITIZENS		DR ROBERT E HOWARD
		MR & MRS JIMMY CANDELARIA
		MR ALLEN L RAMSEL
		MR CARLOS LOPEZ
		MR CHARLES E ZUMWALT
		MR CLAIR HAAKENSON
		MR DAN SCADUTO
		MR DAVE GLOWKA

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INTERESTED CITIZENS		MR EARL F POUND
		MR GILBERT ORTIZ
		MR J TOM MEADOR
		MR JACK BRUTON
		MR KEN ROBEY
		MR LOU DANIELS
		MR LOUIS BRIGHT
		MR LUPE LOPEZ JR
		MR MARK FRANKLIN
		MR MICHAEL S FULP
		MR NEIL BRUTON
		MR R A ANDERSON
		MR ROY LEWIS
		MR S PAWNEE BERGER
		MR WALTON HAWK
		MR WILLIAM R BURNETT
		MR XAIDEE E BAUM
		MRS IRMA YOUNGBLOOD
		MRS KATHY BRITO
		MS BELINDA MIRABAL
		MS CATHERINE BLACKBURN
		MS FLORENCE MARTIN
		MS KATHLEEN YARBROUGH
		MS LILAS V LINDELL
	ARMIJO RANCH	MR SAM ARMIJO
	BLACK HILLS RANCH	MR WALLACE H FERGUSON
	BLUEWATER TOLTEC IRRIG DIST	
	C/O BURKE	MR KEVIN EVANS
	KITAO PUB TRADING CO	MR TAKASHI TAMURA
	NICHOLS COLLEGE	MS MARGARET M YACINO
	NM TRAPPERS ASSOC	MR VICTOR GARCIA, PRESIDENT
	SOIL CONS SOC OF AMERICA	
	SOLOMON PADILLA EST	MR PORFIRIO FLORES
	USDI-BLM	MR GERRY FULLERTON
		MR JERRY SINTZ
		MR JOHN ALBA
		MS ANGIE BURGER
		MS DONITA COTTER
		MS RENA GUTIERREZ

TEAM ORGANIZATION

This statement was prepared by a team of BLM professionals from the BLM Socorro District Office and the BLM New Mexico State Office. Report writers, support personnel and other contributors to the EIS effort are indicated in Table IV-1.

Table IV-1

LIST OF PREPARERS

Name	EIS Responsibility	Education	Experience
Glenn B. Sekavec	Staff Leader	B.S. General Science Fort Hays State University	BLM - 2 yrs. Planning Coordinator FWS - 6 yrs. Habitat Preservation NOAA/NMFS - 1 yr. Environmental Assessment NOAA/NMFS - 6 yrs. Fisheries Research
Paul W. Tanner	Technical Coordinator	B.S. Forestry Management B.S. Forest Recreation Stephen F. Austin State University	BLM - 3 yrs. Area Manager 4 yrs. Realty/ATROW Specialist 2 yrs. Natural Resource Specialist Surface Protection Private Industry - 2 yrs. Project Forester USFS - 1 yr. Forester
Jane A. Farmer	Writer/Editor Computer Programmer	B.A. Business Oklahoma State University	BLM - 4 yrs. Writer/Editor ½ yr. Office Manager ½ yr. Range Clerk SCS - 4½ yrs. Secretary
Tom Sidwell	Livestock Grazing	B.S. Range Management New Mexico State University	BLM - 3 yrs. Supervisory Range Conservationist 3 yrs. Range Conservationist BIA - 1 yr. Range Conservationist Self Employed - 6 yrs. Farm/Ranch Operations and Contractor
Wayne Ludington	Wildlife	B.S. Wildlife Management New Mexico State University	BLM - 4 3/4 yrs. Wildlife Management Biologist
Brian Mills	Wildlife	B.S. Wildlife Biology Oklahoma State University	BLM - 6 yrs. Wildlife Management Biologist
Bob Prickett	Recreation/Wilderness Visual Resource Management	B.A. Asian Studies M.A. Recreation Management University of Oklahoma	BLM - 2 yrs. Outdoor Recreation Planner/Wilderness Coordinator BIA - 3 yrs. Recreation Specialist
Debra Agnolet	Geology, Topography, Climate	B.A. Geology Montclair State College	BLM - 2 yrs. Area Geologist 5 yrs. Instructor Science and Mathematics
Jon Hertz	Lands and Other Land Uses	B.A. Geography Arizona State University	BLM - 3½ yrs. Realty Specialist 3 yrs. Range Technician
Abe Suniga	Other Land Uses	Major in Real Estate Riverside City College Phoenix, School of Real Estate	BLM - 2 yrs. Realty Specialist Department of Defense - 15 yrs. Realty Specialist

Table IV-1

LIST OF PREPARERS (Continued)

Name	EIS Responsibility	Education	Experience
Carol Marchio	Soils	B.S. Resource Management M.S. Land Use Planning University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point	BLM - 5 yrs. Soil Scientist
Bill Kight	Cultural Resources	B.S. Archaeology Eastern New Mexico University	BLM - 3 yrs. Area Archaeologist 1 yr. Archaeological and Museum Consultant
John Gilmore	Water/Air Quality	B.S. Geology New Mexico State University	BLM - 2 yrs. District Hydrologist Private Industry - 1 yr. Well Site Geologist
Laird McIntosh	Vegetation	B.S. Biology M.S. Botany Fort Hays State University	BLM - 1 yr. District Botanist 2 yrs. Range Conservationist USFS - 1 yr. Range Conservationist
Steve Knisely	Vegetation	B.S. Forest Management Northern Arizona University	BLM - 2 yrs. Area Forester Peace Corps - 2 yrs. Tropical Forestry
Teodoro Rael	Economic Conditions	M.A. Economics NM Highlands University	BLM - 5 yrs. Economist USFS - 3 yrs. Economist
Beverly Ray Cochran	Social Conditions	Ed. D. Sociology North Texas State University	BLM - 3 yrs. Sociologist University Education - 10 yrs.
Maureen Halloran	Cartographic Tech.	Rhode Island School of Design, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, and the University of Washington	BLM - 4 yrs. Cartographic Technician U.S. Department of Labor - 3/4 yr. Clerk-Typist

Other Contributors

Barbara Gutierrez - Office Manager
Roger Cumpian - Range Conservationist
Richard Del Curto - Range Technician
Kris Eshelman - Range Conservationist
Ana Gilmore - YACC Office Aid
Penny Gonzalez - Typist
Patricia Gordon - Typist
Carol Hayenga - Physical Science Technician
Frank Lewark - Range Specialist
Lilas Lindell - Public Information Specialist
Nell Vallejos - Typist

DISTRIBUTION OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

The Draft EIS was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on April 26, 1982. A BLM notice announcing the availability of the Draft EIS was then published in the April 29, 1982, issue of the Federal Register (Vol. 47, No. 83). This notice stated that the public comment period, scheduled to end July 9, 1982, was designed to provide concerned and interested parties an opportunity to review the Draft EIS. On May 3, 1982, 712 copies of the Draft EIS were distributed to the preceding computerized list of agencies, interest groups, and individuals. This allowed a 68-day public review period. On May 6, 1982, BLM Socorro District issued a news release to 133 local newspapers, periodicals, and magazines announcing that the Draft EIS was available for public review. On May 7, 1982, EPA published in the Federal Register (Vol. 47, No. 89) the Availability of Environmental Impact Statements filed April 26 through April 30, 1982, pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1506.9.

ADDITIONAL AGENCY COORDINATION

On December 23, 1981, BLM initiated consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, by requesting a listing of Federal endangered, threatened, or proposed animal species and candidate plant species occurring within the DPA. On January 22, 1982, the FWS provided this listing and informed BLM that a biological assessment, for the purpose of identifying listed and proposed species which are likely to be affected by the proposed action, should be prepared. A copy of this correspondence is contained in Appendix D of the Draft EIS. On June 17, 1982, the biological assessment and a request for their review and concurrence was provided to the FWS. By memorandum of July 20, 1982, the FWS provided concurrence with the BLM conclusion that no Federally listed or proposed threatened or endangered species would be affected by the proposed program. Copies of this correspondence and the biological assessment are contained in Appendix D of this document.

On June 21, 1982, the biological assessment was provided to the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and the New Mexico State Heritage Program. Copies of this correspondence are also contained in Appendix D of this document.

PUBLIC HEARINGS RESULTS

On May 21, 1982, the BLM Socorro District issued a news release to all agencies, interest groups, and individuals on the preceding computerized West Socorro Rangeland Management Program EIS mailing list and to 133 newspapers, periodicals, and magazines announcing that BLM would hold public hearings. Formal public hearings were held in Grants, New Mexico on June 8, 1982, and in Datil, New Mexico on June 9, 1982, to receive testimony on the merits of the Preferred Alternative or other alternatives under consideration, the adequacy of the Draft EIS, or both. Table IV-2 lists those persons attending the public hearings.

Table IV-2
Public Hearings Attendees

NAME	AGENCY, ORGANIZATION, OR INDIVIDUAL
June 8, 1982 - Grants, New Mexico	
Kirk McDaniel	New Mexico State University
Jerry G. Schickedanz*	New Mexico State University (Range Improvement Task Force)
Ace Madrooga	Rancher
Mike Bodenchuk	New Mexico Department of Agriculture
Harry Ascencio	Pueblo of Acoma
Augustine Seymour	Pueblo of Acoma
Juanico Sanchez	Berryhill Cattle Association
Ivan Jean Arrossa	Arrossa Ranch
Jack J. Moleres	Moleres Ranch
Jacques Arrossa	Arrossa Ranch
June 9, 1982 - Datil, New Mexico	
Leonard Padilla	Rancher
Oliver M. "Sato" Lee, Jr*	Rancher
Mrs. Carol Coker	Coker Ranch
Mike Bodenchuk	New Mexico Department of Agriculture
Aldrice E. Burk	Rancher
Tom H. Bates	Rancher
Jack Bruton	Rancher
Mrs. Jack Bruton	Rancher
Gene Hite	Triangle C Ranch
Mrs. Lawana Hite	Triangle C Ranch
Pat Leary	Y Ranch
Mrs. Vicky Leary	Y Ranch
Earl W. Ary	Ary Brothers
Richard M. Chavez	Rancher
H. Knowlton	Adobe Ranch
Glenn Knowlton	Adobe Ranch
R. L. "Bob" Morriss*	Escondido Creek Ranch

*Persons that presented testimony

The original public hearing transcripts contained errors that made interpretation of testimony difficult. The following excerpts have been clarified as to content and meaning by the BLM Socorro District with the written approval of those presenting testimony. Each public hearing comment that necessitated a response (see Comments and Responses Section) has been numbered, and BLM's responses are correspondingly provided in the section that follows. Complete transcripts are available for public inspection at the BLM Socorro District, 198 Neel Avenue, Socorro, New Mexico.

PH1

Grants, New Mexico June 8, 1982

DR. JERRY G. SCHICKEDANZ-LAS CRUCES, NM. I am Jerry Schickedanz, Coordinator of the Range Improvement Task Force, New Mexico State University.

I don't have a formal presentation prepared, but in all of the past six or seven grazing EIS's prepared by BLM in New Mexico we have made comments. We have a long disclaimer clause, and I will dispense with that tonight. But I would say that we did appreciate the opportunity that you provided for us to make our comments known. I am not sure whether this is the sixth or seventh EIS in New Mexico that we have commented on, but it appears as though the BLM is either learning how to write without saying anything or the EIS's are getting better in terms of the content of the materials.

Since the beginning of the EIS's, the Range Improvement Task Force has tried to work closely with the Bureau, helping in the ground work, providing comments, and other help before the draft EIS comes out. Probably, the Socorro District, on this EIS has afforded us more cooperation than we have had in the previous six EIS's prepared by BLM in New Mexico. And so we have had input into providing information on the categorization process, at least how the categories were set up for this District, or for this area.

Our economists have been contacted on the economic portions of the EIS, on the procedures, and so forth. The range people have been contacted for input into the monitoring program. I believe we have worked some joint programs with the ranchers and the Bureau on some of these things.

As I have read the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, I have no comments other than editorial. Procedures wise, the basic content of the EIS is good. I think the Range Improvement Task Force, as a whole, is pretty well in agreement with how the material has been presented, how the Bureau plans to implement the EIS in terms of the Section 8 consultation procedures of the Public Rangeland Improvement Act, the monitoring programs, and how final carrying capacities will be determined. We have had, like I said, input into these areas. I guess we would be complaining against our own input to take exception to the types of procedures that have been used.

I think attitudes are basically the most important factor in getting an EIS implemented after it is written, and how people view the content of the EIS. I would like to commend the Bureau on their attitude and how they have been working with the permittees, because I see a good attitude on the permittee's part in working with the Bureau and how they are looking at the studies program, the monitoring program, and how carrying capacities will be developed in the future. I think that is very important. We will provide detailed, written comments to the Bureau prior to the ninth of July, 1982.

PH2

Datil, New Mexico-June 9, 1982

MR. OLIVER M. LEE, JR.-DATIL, NM. My name is Sato Lee. First, to the adequacy of the assumptions that you have made in two separate areas. The first one is on the improvement of game habitat. PH2-1 [The assumption is made that were all the livestock removed, game habitat would improve. I disagree with that. The U. S. Forest Service over the years has continually cut down the numbers of the livestock we have had on Forest Service administered land, and yet they have the same problem that the BLM has in that the game numbers, especially in their deer population, have continued to decrease. I think that your problem lies elsewhere, probably in the control of predators.]

PH2-2 Another assumption that you have made is that in the No Action Alternative, leaving the things the way they are, the country won't improve. I disagree with that. I think probably the large percentage of the country in the last thirty years has improved. In fact, some studies have shown that. So, I think that assumption in your alternative is wrong.

The Impact Statement is better written than the previous ones for two or three reasons: 1) you have had more practice, 2) the Administration has changed, and 3) you have made no recommendation for any immediate cuts like were made in the East Socorro Grazing Environmental Impact Statement. I think it saved you a lot of problems.

One word of caution, somewhere down the line when you come back in four or five years and you start going over this country again, you will have to redo these transects and do your range surveys again. PH2-3 [In the Public Rangeland Improvement Act, the word "cooperation" was taken from Blacks Law Dictionary. It means "A full and equal partnership with neither partner having ascendancy." Keep this in mind as these surveys progress. I think that if you get into some situations where you are going to decide to cut some people, especially since you only control 16 percent of the land, that if you are not really careful how you go about doing things you are going to wind up in some legal fights because, controlling no larger percentage of land, it is kind of like the tail wagging the dog. You are going to have a lot of problems.]

PH2-4 In my particular case, I asked that no surveys be done on any of my private land, and yet I find in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that some deeded land was included in your classification of range conditions. I also asked that no study cages or transects be run on any of my private land, because at the time, 3 or 4 years ago wasn't a situation where I felt like I wanted to cooperate. Yet, we have had transects run and cages put on our private land. Some of them were 2 miles from any BLM land. I am not sure whether that reflects on the adequacy of the people you had out there, as far as knowing where they were or what they were doing, but in any discussion of this Draft Environmental Impact Statement, I want to recognize that was one of the stipulations I made and I believe the Bureau has the letters from me in their office in Socorro to that effect.

PH2

Those are the things I would like understood. Again, I say the Draft Environmental Impact Statement is written better and it recognized the problems better than any of the ones done previously, and I commend you all on that.

That is all the comments I have. I will submit detailed written comment on some particular changes later, as far as some areas that were classified, requesting a change in those. Thank you.

PH3

Datil, New Mexico-June 9, 1982

PH3-1 MR. R. L. MORRISS-QUEMADO, NM. I am Bob Morriss. I am particularly concerned that when we go into these Management Programs of the Preferred Alternative that the criteria for proper management is going to be inadequate on many permits. In other words, there won't be fences or waters to adequately distribute livestock according to the distribution management requirement of each management category. I think this should be addressed.

PH3-2 Another concern of mine was also a comment of another permittee. In terms of ecological range condition, you have the ranches classified as a whole. The permittee does not necessarily know how he comes up, whether he has got 10 percent poor or 10 percent good, or what percentage is what, or I have not seen a criteria breakdown.

That's about the only two things I have right now. Thank you.

PH2-1 The Draft EIS (Figure I-1, page 1-15) states that if Alternative 3 (Elimination of Livestock Grazing) were implemented, all forage within the DPA would be available for exclusive use of wildlife, watershed, or other resource uses.

PH2-2 BLM Socorro District estimates indicate that under the No Action Alternative, forage allocation is increasing at a constant rate of 200 AUMs per year. This is illustrated in Figure I-1 of the Draft EIS, page I-15.

PH2-3 Those transects established during the Soil and Vegetative Inventory Method (SVIM) surveys would not be utilized in determining future livestock adjustments. Any proposed livestock adjustments would be based on long-term trend, utilization, actual use, and precipitation studies established and effectuated through the consultation process.

PH2-4 Deeded land acreage was not taken into account during the allotment categorization process. Tables E-2 and E-3 (Draft EIS, pages E-15 through E-22) reflect the correct allotment land status acreages and range condition.

PH3-1 Necessary rangeland improvements would be developed on an allotment-by-allotment basis during the consultation process as a prelude to developing and implementing specific management actions. If funding is not available (see assumption No. 1, Draft EIS, page III-2) for construction of rangeland improvements, interim management plans would be developed through further consultation until such time as those necessary rangeland improvements could be constructed to further intensify management.

PH3-2 Table E-2 (Draft EIS, pages E-15 through E-21) illustrates the total number of acres within an allotment and the acreage by range condition and land status. The percentage of an allotment in a range condition class can be derived from this table.

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

During the formal review and comment period (May 3 to July 9, 1982) 19 memoranda and letters were received from agencies and the public. After the close of the review and comment period, an additional three memoranda and letters were received. All correspondence is listed in Table IV-3.

All memoranda, letters, and public hearing testimony were reviewed to determine if comments related to the merits of the Preferred Alternative and/or other alternatives under consideration, the adequacy and accuracy of the Draft EIS, or both. Comments which presented new data, questioned facts or analyses, or had a direct bearing on issues of the Draft EIS or the environmental impacts of the Preferred Alternative or other alternatives under consideration, were evaluated and given responses. Letters which did not address the adequacy or

Table IV-3
Comment Received

Control Number	Date Received in BLM Socorro District	Respondents to the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program Draft EIS
1	05/10/82	U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
2	05/11/82	New Mexico State Planning Division (State Clearinghouse)
3	05/27/82	James M. Jackson
4	06/01/82	State Historic Preservation Officer - New Mexico Historic Preservation Bureau
5	06/01/82	Walton Hawk
6	06/02/82	New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
7	06/07/82	U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
8	06/10/82	U. S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
9	06/16/82	Jay Patterson
10	06/18/82	U. S. Army Corp of Engineers
11	06/18/82	U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
12	07/02/82	New Mexico Department of Agriculture
13	07/06/82	New Mexico Archeological Council
14	07/06/82	New Mexico Natural History Institute
15	07/09/82	U. S. Soil Conservation Service
16	07/09/82	Wildlife Management Institute
17	07/09/82	U. S. National Park Service
18	07/09/82	New Mexico Bureau of Mines and Mineral Resources
19	07/09/82	New Mexico State Planning Division (State Clearinghouse)
20	07/12/82	U. S. Minerals Management Service
21	07/13/82	U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
22	07/14/82	New Mexico State University (Range Improvement Task Force)

accuracy of the Draft EIS were not responded to in the Final EIS; however, letters will be sent to all correspondents responding to their concerns. In addition, any further correspondence received by the BLM Socorro District will be afforded full consideration in the final decision for the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program.

All letters and memoranda are reproduced, following, in their entirety and BLM's responses are correspondingly presented to comments in each letter in the section that follows. An Errata, Modifications, and Additions to the Draft EIS Section, resultant from these comments, is presented following BLM's responses.

1

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON D C 20460

MAY 5 1982

OFFICE OF
THE ADMINISTRATOR

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

I am writing to verify the official filing of the EIS entitled:

Draft: Proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program,
Catron, Cibola, Socorro and Vanencia Counties, New Mexico
(#820236)

This EIS was received by the Office of Federal Activities on April 26, 1982. It has been determined the above document meets the requirements for filing an EIS as set forth under Section 1506.9 of the CEQ Regulations. Accordingly, EPA has scheduled publication of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register dated May 7, 1982 and the public review period is scheduled to terminate on *July 9, 1982.

If you have any questions or concerns relating to this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or Ms. Jan Lott of my staff on 245-3006.

Sincerely,

Kathi L. Wilson

Kathi L. Wilson
Management Analyst
Office of Federal Activities (A-104)

* As stated in the EIS, EPA published July 9, 1982 as the end of the review period.

Mr. Glenn Sekavec
EIS Staff Leader
Socorro District Office
Bureau of Land Management
US Department of Interior
PO Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

2

STATE PLANNING DIVISION
(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE)

MIS-2

APPLICANT NOTIFICATION OF RECEIPT

DATE: May 7, 1982

TO: Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Post Office Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

ATTN: Mr. Glenn Sekavec

FROM: State Planning Division
Department of Finance & Administration
505 Don Gaspar
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501
(505) 827-2073

Project Title DEIS West Socorro Rangeland Management Program SAI Number NM 82 05 07-024

Federal Funding Agency DOI Federal Catalog Number 15.000

This is to notify you that we have received your:

_____ Notification of Intent

_____ Preapplication

DEIS __X__ Application and Standard Federal Form 424 and State Supplemental Form MIS-1

The following action has been taken:

_____ Your application does not require review; thank you for sending a copy to the Planning Division. Please advise us when Federal Action is taken on your application.

__X__ The review of your application is being coordinated by Lilliemae Ortiz
(Lead Agency Review Coordinator)

Planning (Department) (505) 827-5191 (Telephone)

You may expect to receive copies of the Review by June 7, 1982
(Date)

YOUR APPLICATION SHOULD ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT TO THE SUBSTATE CLEARINGHOUSE(S) CHECKED BELOW. PLEASE DO SO IN ORDER TO AVOID DELAY OF FEDERAL ACTION.

_____ San Juan Regional Committee
__✓__ Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments
_____ McKinley Area Council of Governments
_____ Eastern Plains Council of Governments
__✓__ Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments

_____ North Central New Mexico Economic Development District
_____ Southeastern New Mexico Economic Development District
__✓__ Southern Rio Grande Council of Governments

(See other side for names and addresses of the substate clearinghouses)

Approved January, 1980
Secretary, DFA

White—Original for applicant
Canary—SPO copy
Pink—COG's copy
Goldenrod—Lead copy

3

Dear Sirs:

3-1 I would like to begin my comment by stating that I favor Alternative 2. I would also like to state that Alternative 2 is based on the premise that everything remains static, a false premise. As a result, if there were no Draft Environment Impact Statement a situation similar to Alternative 2, things would still change. It is my belief that those changes would be toward a greater improvement in the range than the BLM projections.

The rancher has realized that it is in his best interests to manage his allotments in a manner to improve range conditions. To put it simply, no grass, no beef, no money; more grass, more beef, more money. Here I would like to quote from the Draft E.I.S.:

3-2 The need for management and the level of intensity of management are dictated largely by range conditions and range trend. Smith (1980) states that overall range conditions on the public range improved or stabilized as a result of management practices and improvements used on a very wide scale. Martin (1975) states "that many semi-desert ranges have improved since the 1930's." (1) Has the status quo done that badly?

3-3 In Box's opinion (1979) "The rangelands are in the best condition they have been in this century and that on the average they are improving."(2) Has the status quo done that badly?

3-4 It seems to me that the status quo has improved conditions at less cost to the government. Air, sediment, water resources, vegetation, and wildlife would also improve with the range conditions.

I feel that Alternative 1 also has some merits as a guide to the rancher. To continue the quote from Box the rangelands "are not producing anywhere near their potential." (2) The BLM should continue to formulate a management plan for each allotment. Once formulated it should be offered to the rancher on a voluntary basis much as a Soil Conservation Service plan. Approached in this manner the rancher would be more receptive.

The range should continue to be monitored as suggested in Alternative I. After a period long enough to show trend, and the range continues to deteriorate, then use Alternative I as proposed. It is my understanding that range scientists basically agree it takes 5 years to prove trend, or if an allotment is improving or becoming poorer. The BLM is prepared to make momentous decisions on insufficient data.

3-5 Now if my arguments for Alternative II are in vain, and Alternative I is implemented, I strongly differ with some points in Alternative I. Cuts in livestock numbers should be initiated only after a range monitoring program of five years for the reasons stated before. Allottees should be informed of the possibility during the consultation period. Sudden cuts would damage the socio-economic environment of the community. Table H-16, H-17, H-18 and H-19 shows this.

3-6 I disagree with the need for 100 acre enclosures mentioned on page 1-16. The few allotments picked would bear an overproportionate burden for the entire district. I also fear a loss of that amount of acreage will lead to a small automatic cut in livestock numbers. The enclosures should be no greater than 5 acres, with no allotment having greater than two enclosures if two different range sites occur. This should allow a greater geographical diversity of the same type of range. It would lessen variations that may happen in weather patterns, small differences in soil systems, etc., and prevent human error in the original choice of the enclosure for a certain range type.

Sincerely,

James M. Jackson
Red Hill Route
Quemado, New Mexico 87829

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(1) Draft EIS West Socorro III-32

(2) Draft EIS West Socorro III-32

4

STATE OF NEW MEXICO
DEPARTMENT OF
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION
STATE PLANNING DIVISION
505 DON GASPAR AVENUE
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87503
(505) 827-2073
(505) 827-5191
(505) 827-2108

BRUCE KING
GOVERNOR
KATHLEEN R. MARR
SECRETARY

ANITA HISENBERG
DIRECTOR
JOE GUILLEN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

May 28, 1982

Mr. Paul W. Tanner
Area Manager
San Augustine Resource Area
Socorro District
Bureau of Land Management
P. O. Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Dear Mr. Tanner:

This is with reference to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program, which we have reviewed with the object of determining how the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 will be met with respect to this undertaking.

This DEIS explains that sample or reconnaissance cultural resource surveya either already existed or were performed in the Divide Planning Area in order to assess the requirements for concurrence with cultural resource law and regulation. It goes on to say that areas of direct effect will be surveyed prior to approval of specific projects, and that identified sites will be avoided or salvaged in accordance with the PMOA of January 14, 1980. The Draft points out that the salvaging of a cultural property is an irreversible commitment of resources. The Draft includes tabulations of known sites.

The Bureau's responsibility under the National Historic Preservation Act is to locate, inventory and nominate all historic and prehistoric properties under its ownership or control which may be eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places, and to exercise caution to assure that any such property is not inadvertently damaged or destroyed. These responsibilities are to be carried out in cooperation with the State Historic Preservation Officer. By the same token, it is the SHPO's responsibility to conduct and direct a comprehensive survey of such cultural properties in cooperation with the Bureau, and to adviae and assist the Bureau in carrying out its historic preservation responsibilities.

In my opinion, if intensity of survey and intensity of effect are generally commensurate, if intensive survey assures identification and analysis of cultural properties in areas of proposed direct effect, if the significance of such properties is determined in accordance with 36 CFR 63, and if effects on such properties are also determined and mitigation of those effects agreed on prior to land disturbance, the requirements of the law will be met.

These requirements are embodied in an existing programmatic agreement between the Bureau and SHPO (No. NMSO-170).

The procedures outlined in the DEIS are consistent, in my opinion, with the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act. I will expect to continue to work with you to implement these requirements.

Thank you for your continuing cooperation.

Sincerely,

Thomas W Merlan

Thomas W. Merlan
State Historic Preservation Officer
Historic Preservation Bureau

TWM:jmg

5

Walton Hawk
Box 40
San Cristobal, NM 87564

May 26, 1982

Glenn Sekavec, EIS Staff Leader
BLM, District Office,
P.O. Box 1219,
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

I wish to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program. I do not know the area well enough to make specific proposals.

I believe that I can critisize the plan for the same reasons that I found fault with those of the Forest Service, both National
5-1 and local. [Manipulation is emphasised too strongly in relation to protection. This may be more important where the land treatment is not cost effective especialley in these times of low budgets.] Too much weight is placed on expected production improvements, that are not fore gone conclusions. [Too little attention is payed to how a
5-2 specific land treatment to obtain one objective may affect other conditions.] There is too much repetition as when describing the effects of alternate plans, and elsewhere.

I have never liked or approved of Pinyon-Juniper controle of large areas and had hoped it was a land treatment of the past with the rising demand for fuel wood and lowered opperating budjets.
5-3 [I believe the importance of each of these plants seperately and in combination as food and shelter for Wildlife has not been weighed heavily enough.] They are a primary source of wintering food for several species of birds and many mammels including deer. Water does not run out of Pinyon-Juniper woodland any dirtier or in deeper arroyos than elsewhere, and the shade keeps some ground damper longer.

5-4 [I hope that you will find it more adviseable to have wood cut from the woodland you have planned to distroy and just enlarge natural openings.]

I hope that your management programs are taking into account the valid complaints of the proponents of the "Sagebrush Rebellion and or Privatization" without loosing Federal controle of our Public lands.

Sincerely:
Walton Hawk

6

State of New Mexico

GOVERNOR
BRUCE KING

DIRECTOR AND SECRETARY
TO THE COMMISSION
HAROLD F. OLSON

DEPARTMENT OF GAME AND FISH
STATE CAPITOL
SANTA FE
87503

STATE GAME COMMISSION
EDWARD MUNOZ, CHAIRMAN
GALLUP
J. W. JONES
ALBUQUERQUE
ROBERT H. FORREST
CARLSBAD
BILL LITTRELL
CIMARRON
JAMES H. KOCH
SANTA FE

May 28, 1982

Mr. Glen Sekavec
EIS Staff Leader
Bureau of Land Management
District Office
P. O. Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish has reviewed your Draft Environmental Impact Statement, West Socorro Rangeland Management Program, and I wish to make the following comments.

I concur with Alternative I, the Preferred Alternative. This alternative as listed on Page I-4 should be conducive to achieving the desired long-term objectives as listed on Page I-2. Your proposed Wildlife Habitat Monitoring Program is good and this Department looks forward to cooperating with you on the wildlife surveys. Your Standard Operating Procedures for rangeland improvements and vegetative land treatments listed on Pages I-22 and I-23 will protect the environment and enhance long-term benefits.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment upon the draft statement.

Sincerely,

Harold F. Olson
Harold F. Olson
Director

fm

7

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION VI
1201 ELM STREET
DALLAS, TEXAS 75270

June 4, 1982

Mr. Glenn Sekavec
EIS Staff Leader
BLM District Office
P.O. Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

We have completed our review of your Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the proposed rangeland management program for the Divide Planning Area in Catron, Cibola, Valencia and Socorro Counties in west-central New Mexico.

We offer the following comment for your consideration:

7-1 The EIS could have been improved by providing assurances against possible overgrazing. This would be especially important during periods of unseasonal drought.

We classify your Draft EIS as LO-1. Specifically, we have no objections to the project as it relates to EPA's legislative mandates. The EIS contained sufficient information to evaluate adequately the possible environmental impacts which could result from project implementation. Our classification will be published in the Federal Register in accordance with our responsibility to inform the public of our views on proposed Federal actions under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

Definitions of the categories are provided on the enclosure. Our procedure is to categorize the EIS on both the environmental consequences of the proposed action and on the adequacy of the EIS at the draft stage, whenever possible.

We appreciated the opportunity to review the Draft EIS. Please send our office five (5) copies of the Final EIS at the same time it is sent to the Office of Federal Activities, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C.

Sincerely yours,

Frances E. Phillips
Dick Whittington, P.E.
Regional Administrator

Enclosure

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE ACTION

LO - Lack of Objections

EPA has no objections to the proposed action as described in the draft impact statement; or suggests only minor changes in the proposed action.

ER - Environmental Reservations

EPA has reservations concerning the environmental effects of certain aspects of the proposed action. EPA believes that further study of suggested alternatives or modifications is required and has asked the originating Federal agency to re-assess these aspects.

EU - Environmentally Unsatisfactory

EPA believes that the proposed action is unsatisfactory because of its potentially harmful effect on the environment. Furthermore, the Agency believes that the potential safeguards which might be utilized may not adequately protect the environment from hazards arising from this action. The Agency recommends that alternatives to the action be analyzed further (including the possibility of no action at all).

ADEQUACY OF THE IMPACT STATEMENT

Category 1 - Adequate

The draft impact statement adequately sets forth the environmental impact of the proposed project or action as well as alternatives reasonably available to the project or action.

Category 2 - Insufficient Information

EPA believes the draft impact statement does not contain sufficient information to assess fully the environmental impact of the proposed project or action. However, from the information submitted, the Agency is able to make a preliminary determination of the impact on the environment. EPA has requested that the originator provide the information that was not included in the draft statement.

Category 3 - Inadequate

EPA believes that the draft impact statement does not adequately assess the environmental impact of the proposed project or action, or that the statement inadequately analyzes reasonably available alternatives. The Agency has requested more information and analysis concerning the potential environmental hazards and has asked that substantial revision be made to the impact statement. If a draft statement is assigned a Category 3, no rating will be made of the project or action, since a basis does not generally exist on which to make a determination.

8

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS
ALBUQUERQUE AREA OFFICE
P.O. BOX 8327
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87198

IN REPLY REFER TO:
Environmental
Quality - 305

JUN 0 2 1982

Memorandum

To: State Director, Bureau of Land Management, Socorro, New Mexico
Attention: Glenn Sekavec, EIS Staff Leader

From: Area Director

Subject: Review of Draft Environmental Impact Statement - West Socorro Rangeland Management Program

We have reviewed the subject document. We note that while portions of the Acoma, Laguna, and Ramah Navajo Reservations are included within the planning area for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), these reservation lands will not be directly affected by the proposed action or the alternatives.

8-1 While the document appears generally complete and well prepared, we also note that access of Native Americans to traditional religious sites is a subject which is not addressed in the document. Our review leaves us unable to determine whether the First Amendment rights of Native Americans, as affirmed by the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, will be infringed or not.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. William C. Allan, Area Environmental Quality Specialist, Environmental Quality Services, at 766-3374.

Acting Area Director

9

June14, 1982
P.O. Box 987
Moriarty, N.M. 87035

Mr. Glenn Sekavec
Staff Leader
Draft EIs
West Socorro Rangeland Management Program

Dear Sir:

The following is my comment on the Draft EIS for the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program.

9-1 It is obvious and assumed by the compilers that the Draft EIS is written from the perspective of 'improved' rangeland conditions for the purpose of increased livestock production. 9-2 That this is a bias resulting from 'historic' (short term - last 100 years or so) use of this land is obvious but that this is the 'best' way to manage these public lands in the future is a presumption. It is indicated that 7 million dollars in public money would be spent 'long term' in this planning area to increase livestock production and that 9-3 eleven (11) people or firms in the 'large commercial ranch size' category would reap at least half of the benefits of this expenditure, which for these operators represents a direct public subsidy of at least $300,000 - $400,000 each 'long term'. It is my view that cattle production should not be subsidized in this way.

However, I am not naive enough tothink that any other management presumption is likely to take over, this side of the millinium, so I do have comments about specific inclusions:

I am very disturbed about the pinon-juniper control intended for approximately 38,000 acres. It is my observation that when pinon-juniper forests are wrecked with chaining that these areas are not good for anything in what might be considered real time. I am acquinted with areas destroyed in this way that decades later are just as destroyed and just as useless to anyone as when they were first chained. Some amount of woodcutting might be the only redemable economic reason for this kind of desacration. I am also against other "vegetative land treatments" over a remaining a proximately 9-4 315,000 acres. I am particularly disturbed by "certain allowed actions, such a prescribed burning," in proposed wilderness areas (III-38) and wished that these "actions" had been more specifically outlined as to location and extent. I hope that this issue will be addressed in the Draft EIS for Wilderness in this planning area.

9-5 I am at odds as to how proposed "control" of 300000 acres of pinon-juniper (III-28) will provide additional cover (III-24) for vertebrate wildlife. While it is true that water and rangeland development might provide better habitat for large game animals depending on competition from livestock, because you say that under Alternative 3 "surface water quality would improve" (III-10) presumably adding the improvement for wildlife.

[I am disturbed by the possible winter inclusion in
the Divide Planning Area of endangered species Bald Eagle
9-6 and Peregrine Falcon (II-42) and the consequences of widespread
herbicide use in this area.] [I am also concerned with the
9-7 possible consequences of burning on ground nesting species.]
9-8 [I am concerned about the consequences of the desstrction
of Pinon-juniper habitat on mule deer and antelope populations
which according to the EIS (II-35) depend on this cover.]

In summary, I favor alternative 3, in that there is little economic justification for the ranching lifestyle in this area without massive government subsidy. A recent BLM decision further reduced grazing permit fees because of reduced beef prices in the market (i.e.- the public's unwillingness to pay the exorbitant government subsidized prices for beef) indicating the direct relationship between the need for government subsidy of the cattle industry and the government's willingness to do just that. Alternative 1 looks like a minimum environmental disaster and Alternative 4 an unmitigated one. Alternative2 has already brought much of the state's grasslands to the terrible state which it so not hard to find examples of.

I am sorry that I was unable to attend the public meetings but wish that your office would sdedule a public meeting in either Socorro or Albuquerque when the final EIS comes out at a later date.

Yours truly,

J Patterson

Jay Patterson

10

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
ALBUQUERQUE DISTRICT CORPS OF ENGINEERS
P O BOX 1580
ALBUQUERQUE NEW MEXICO 87103

REPLY TO ATTENTION OF SWAED-EP

16 June 1982

Mr. Glenn Sekavec, EIS Staff Leader
Bureau of Land Management
District Office
P.O. Box 1219
Socorro, NM 87801

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program. The sections pertaining to cultural resources have been examined by our staff archaeologists and their comments are provided for your consideration.

We are pleased to see that the BLM has outlined appropriate procedures which will protect significant cultural resources or mitigate adverse impacts upon them which may result from the rangeland management program. However, the nature of the adverse impacts on cultural resources is not adequately identified for the different project alternatives. I am providing some suggestions in the attached comments.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft EIS. We are looking forward to working with the BLM on other projects in the future.

Sincerely,

J Coombe

JASPER H. COOMBES, P.E.
Chief, Engineering and Planning Division

1 Incl
As stated

10

Review Comments: Draft EIS for the Proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program, BLM

In general, we found that the draft EIS for the West Socorro Rangeland
Management Program indicates that the appropriate measures will be taken to
protect significant cultural resources. It states that surveys will be
conducted, and that where adverse impacts cannot be avoided, they will be
mitigated under a Memorandum of Agreement between the BLM, SHPO, and
10-1 Advisory Council. However, the draft EIS fails to adequately describe the
cultural resources or the possible effects of the alternatives on these
10-2 resources. This lack of information seriously inhibits the ability to
evaluate the alternatives in terms of cultural resources. In addition, it
10-3 fails to indicate the nature and extent of the surveys which will be
10-4 conducted, and what are considered to be adverse impacts. Section specific
comments are provided below.

I. Alternatives Including the Preferred Alternative. Under the
descriptions of the alternatives, it is evident that a substantial amount of
ground disturbance (e.g. chaining) will occur under most alternatives.
10-5 However, Table 1-5 does not adequately reflect the nature of the impacts of
any of the alternatives on cultural resources. Certainly many of the
impacts, such as grazing, are difficult to quantify, but some prediction of
their effects is warranted. Merely to state that the impacts on cultural
resources are "nonquantifiable" is not sufficient and is inconsistent with
other nonquantified entries in the table.

10-6 II. Affected Environment. This section fails to describe the affected cultural resources. There should be a brief prehistoric and historic overview for the study area and a discussion of the sites. Without providing this information, the nature of the cultural resources cannot be understood. The data presented in Appendix F for one of the Planning Units is quite interesting, but should have included data for the remaining study areas as well. When providing data such as this, care must be taken not to provide sufficient locational information for sites to be relocated by unauthorized personnel.

Too much time is spent on justifying which of the four Planning Units was
selected for survey. Most of the justifications are weak and are not
altogether necessary. For example, just because surveys in the Malpais
would be twice as costly and compass readings may be difficult, this does
10-7 not mean that a Class II inventory was not warranted. It would seem that
the nature of existing data, known site density, and predicted impacts would
be more important factors. Also, a map depicting the four Planning Units
would be helpful. This map should be the same scale as the other maps in
the draft EIS, and should indicate what areas have already been surveyed for
cultural resources.

III. Environmental Consequences. This section acknowledges that the BLM
will conduct surveys of "specific areas" and that every effort will be made
10-8 to avoid adverse impacts, but there is no discussion of the adverse impacts
10-9 or a clear statement of which areas would be surveyed. Would all areas of
10-10 construction activities and major ground disturbance (e.g. chaining) be
surveyed? Is "ripping, pitting, furrowing" considered to have an adverse
10-11 impact on cultural resources? What are the adverse impacts? Perhaps a
10-12 table showing each type of activity, including grazing, and the predicted
impacts on cultural resources could be included in this section.

11

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT
FORT WORTH REGIONAL OFFICE
221 WEST LANCASTER AVENUE
P.O. BOX 2905
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76113

REGION VI

IN REPLY REFER TO:

June 16, 1982

Mr. Glenn Sekavec
EIS Staff Leader
District Office
Bureau of Land Management
United States Department of the Interior
Post Office Box 1219
Socorro, NM 87801

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

RE: 1792 West Socorro EIS

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program has been reviewed in the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Dallas Area Office and Fort Worth Regional Office, and it has been determined that the Department will not have comments on the subject Statement.

Sincerely,

Victor J. Hancock
Environmental Clearance Officer

AREA OFFICES
DALLAS, TEXAS · LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS · NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA · OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA · SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

12

STATE OF NEW MEXICO

Department of Agriculture
GOVERNOR'S CABINET

BRUCE KING
Governor

Box 3189, NMSU Campus
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003
Phone: (505) 646-3007

WILLIAM P. STEPHENS
Secretary

June 30, 1982

Mr. Glen Sekavec
EIS Staff Leader
Bureau of Land Management
P. O. Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

This letter is to serve as official comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management program.

I wish to compliment the Bureau on this EIS and the recognition of the necessary flexibility required in the ranching industry. Under the proposed action, no allotments are required to reduce livestock numbers. To incorporate such flexibility into an EIS is indicative of the exemplary personnel who worked on this document and is a credit to the Bureau.

Of a general nature, our major concern deals mostly with the incorporation of Section 8 consultation, cooperation, and coordination as outlined in the Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 and the New Mexico Bureau of Land Management Rangeland Consultation Policy. As you are aware, this office is a member of the Section 8 "target group" by Memorandum of Understanding between the state director, Bureau of Land Management and the Governor of New Mexico.

The New Mexico Bureau of Land Management Rangeland Consultation Policy states
that "It is the intent of the Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico to expand
the concept of consultation, cooperation and coordination into all phases of
the grazing program . . . ." While it cannot be argued that the public,
including this office, had been consulted regarding the initial categorization
12-1 process, the important phases of cooperation and coordination were not
included. Identification of resource conflicts, current use patterns and even
potential range conditions would have been enhanced by cooperation and
coordination with individuals in the area. This absence of the Section 8
process seems to have been a breakdown in the preparation of the draft EIS.

12-2 If we have interpreted the draft document correctly, there are apparently no plans for the Bureau to incorporate Section 8 consultation, cooperation and coordination when processing decisions as a result of the final EIS.
In consideration of the recent change in district and associate district

managers, and the differences between this EIS and others from within New Mexico, this is understandable. We would, however, request a meeting with the Bureau once Mr. Sparks becomes settled as the district manager. At this meeting, procedures for Section 8 incorporation should be identified for inclusion in the final EIS in order that each target group member will be aware of the process.

12-3 We recommend the Bureau not utilize ecological range condition as the only measure of rangeland improvement. The system of ecological range condition is based on the premise that a climax rangeland community is in excellent condition. Basic ecological principles indicate that the most productive communities for both livestock and wildlife are not necessarily ecologically excellent conditions. Rather they are generally somewhere below the climax community. Again, the objective for management, including targeting a specific seral stage, should be developed through the Section 8 process.

12-4 The preferred alternative in the EIS also contains specific recommended vegetative manipulations, some of which are in existing Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's). There is no discussion, however, of the feasibility of these manipulations under the Interim Management Policy (IMP) for WSA's. Any grazing decision which is reached without consideration of WSA management should be flexible enough to accommodate changes either mandated or precluded by the IMP. The Section 8 process is imperative to these areas.

12-5 The draft document indicates the herbicide applications described on page I-21 are in pounds of herbicide product per acre. As stated, the recommended rates are in violation of Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act Section 2 (EE). For use of a product at rates less than labeled rates, a Special Local Need (24(c)) registration is needed. An application to this Department for such a registration should include efficacy data.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this draft EIS and look forward to working with the Bureau to the mutual benefit of everyone concerned.

Sincerely,

W.P. Stephens

William P. Stephens

WPS/mb

13

NEW MEXICO ARCHEOLOGICAL COUNCIL, INC

c/o Quivira Research Center
3017 Commercial NE
Albuquerque, NM 87107

July 2, 1982

Mr. Glenn Sekavec, EIS Staff Leader
Bureau of Land Management, Socorro District Office
P.O. Box 1219
Socorro, NM 87801

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

We have reviewed the cultural resources portions of the Draft EIS for the proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program.

In light of the paucity of Class III surveys (and reports thereon) for much of this area, BLM's assessment of known cultural resources and future management plans seem appropriately cautious and prudent.

Cordially,

Carol J. Condie

Carol J. Condie
Chair, Research Committee
New Mexico Archeological Council

14

THE NEW MEXICO NATURAL HISTORY INSTITUTE

A Nonprofit Corporation

Registered Address:

St. John's College Campus
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

Address reply to:
Henry M Zeller
Secretary, NMNHI
PO Box 870
Silver City, New Mex
88062

5 July 1982

Your ref: 1792 (020)

Mr Paul W Tanner, Area Manager
San Agustin Resource Area, BLM
Post Office Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Dear Mr Tanner:

Thank you for sending me a copy of the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program Draft EIS.

We are very interested in this program, but unfortunately we just do not have the manpower to submit comments at this time. We are very interested, however, and would like to observe the progress of the program as it proceeds.

Because of this interest I would be very grateful if you would continue to send me program documents: the Final EIS, Rangeland Program Summary, subsequent updates, etc.

Sincerely

Henry M Zeller
Secretary

15

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Soil
Conservation
Service

Box 2007
Albuquerque, NM
87103

July 6, 1982

Mr. Glenn Sekavik
EIS Staff Leader
Bureau of Land Management
P.O. Box 1219
Socorro, NM 87801

Dear Mr. Sekavik:

We received the DEIS for the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program and have completed our review.

We commend the clarity and organization which are evident. We recognize that specific management actions will only be developed and installed as a result of decisions reached on individual allotments. However, the broad objectives and management alternatives which are described in Alternative 1 appear to us to be a practical approach toward reaching the stated resource goals.

There are several items which we bring to your attention, as needing further consideration:

The eight objectives stated on page I-4 are commendable, and should be attain-
able by the actuation of management proposed by Alternative 1. We suggest that
the importance of grazing management, including rest, systems and adjustment
15-1 of livestock numbers, is not adequately emphasized. As we read the descriptions
of Alternative 1, it appears that mechanical and facilitating practices receive
more emphasis than does grazing management. We suggest that real accomplishment
of the eight objectives will come about only if proper grazing management occurs.

15-2 Proposed fencing and water developments, as facilitating practices, are strongly complementary to grazing management and will come close to meeting your criteria for B:C ratio. We question the proposals for mechanical or chemical control of pinyon-juniper and rabbitbrush as being cost-effective practices at todays prices.

15-3 We also would suggest a reevaluation of the proposed seeding and interseeding in these resource areas of New Mexico. We consider these practices as being of limited success on most sites, and as being economically unfeasible.

15-4 In Section III - Environmental Consequences, Wildlife, it is stated on page III-29 that the Baird's sparrow, a New Mexico Group II endangered species, is currently not found within the DPA. Yet we find in other sections, such as pages xi and iv of the summary, statements claiming that the Baird's sparrow would benefit through improved habitat. We suggest that these inconsistencies be clarified in the EIS, and furthermore, that references to the Baird's sparrow be deleted.

15-5 It is noted that the special resource values of riparian areas were recognized, as were their overused and deteriorated vegetation condition (II-43, 44). Standard Operating Procedure #15 (I-23) will prohibit vegetation land improvements and allow protection and enhancement by installing rangeland improvements. It is unclear what types of management actions are proposed for these one to two acre, isolated locations. We suggest that the proposed measures be described, possibly in Chapter I - "description of the alternatives." Will there be any special consideration given to restoring riparian vegetation in Bluewater Canyon (II-57)?

15-6 The DEIS predicts that mule deer populations will increase from 2200 to 4500 with the installation of the preferred alternative. A concurrent doubling of deer hunter visitor days is also predicted. Data presented (II-37) states that the current deer herds are less than 50 percent of the habitats optimum capacity. This is attributed to three factors; forage competition with livestock, yearlong grazing patterns, and low forage quality, particularly the lack of quality browse species. Given these facts, it is hard to understand how the predicted doubling of the herd is to be accomplished. The predicted increase in vegetation would appear largely to occur in the form of grass species. Research indicates that mule deer make only limited use of grass species, on a yearlong basis. We suggest that additional information, including acreages of Management Categories, by Standard Habitat Sites, be presented in III-27 of the final ES, to clearly support the predicted herd increases.

Thank you for the opportunity of commenting on this proposed rangeland management program.

Sincerely,

Darold C. McCrossen

Ray T. Margo, Jr. for
State Conservationist

cc:
Peter C. Myers, Chief, SCS, Washington, DC

16

Wildlife Management Institute

709 Wire Building, 1000 Vermont Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005 • 202 / 347-1774

DANIEL A. POOLE
President
L. R. JAHN
Vice-President
L. L. WILLIAMSON
Secretary
JACK S. PARKER
Board Chairman

July 6, 1982

Mr. Glenn Sekavec
EIS Team Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Post Office Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

The Wildlife Management Institute is pleased to comment on DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT, WEST SOCORRO RANGELAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM, New Mexico.

Our staff has reviewed the document and visited the Divide area on the ground.

16-1 The plan (Alternative 1) appears adequate for wildlife, providing forage to reach the long-term goals of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. We say "appears" because there are no details except the amount of forage to be
16-2 allocated. This does not specify any quality or type of forage, only quantity.
16-3 It provides no priority of management decisions to resolve controversies on winter range or other critical habitat and it provides no fencing of riparian areas. The plan may very well do what is claimed for wildlife, but more details are needed to properly evaluate it.

We have serious objection to this plan as a public policy. The very statements and numbers in the document show that it is a direct subsidy to the 187 livestock allotments on the area. It is an example of "middle class" food stamps. It is a round-about subsidy because it is a round-about way to avoid permit reductions, which should be the first step in sound range management when improvement is needed. The Forest Service long since took that approach on much of their lands, and the results of reductions are clear.

Page 1-8, elimination of lands from category A is a direct indication of this "no-cut" philosophy. The thinking expressed in succeeding paragraphs on Page 1-8 is further proof of the "no-cut" premise.

BLM plans to treat 353,320 acres of the 896,092 acres of public land in the planning area--this is 39 percent of the land (P 1-19). There have been no previous land treatments in the area (P II-30).

16-4 These treatments will provide a long term increase of 36,600 livestock AUM (P 1-4). The total cost of treatment and structure will be $7,148,000 (P III-51). This computes to a cost of $195.30 per AUM (our figure).

Mr. Glenn Sekavec -2- July 6, 1982

16-5 Each of the permittees will have an average increase of 235 AUM (P III-40). At the cost of $195.30 AUM this will amount to a direct average subsidy of $45,850.50 per operator.

The plan provides a long-term increase of 5,191 Wildlife AUM (P 1-9) that could also be provided by limited direct habitat improvement, livestock reductions, and some improvement and priority to wildlife on winter ranges. Those wildlife costs could logically be allocated to the general public for the management of a public resource and would be minor compared to the massive development subsidy proposed for livestock.

All the jobs created by this plan will be temporary and construction related. No new jobs will be created in the livestock industry (P III-51).

While this subsidy of the livestock industry is taking place, the following appropriations for BLM Management of Wildlife Habitat (a public resource) for the entire state of New Mexico is on record:

Fiscal Year	State Wildlife Budget
FY-82	$927,000 (Actual)
FY-83	$800,000
FY-84	Level A - $267,000 Level B - $525,000
Projected Professional Personnel Loss	4

Since grazing fees charged for public land historically have been below fair market value, there is little hope the government will ever recover any significant amount of the improvement expenditure. This whole plan shows the priority now under way. Subsidy for commodity users-reduction in appropriations to manage public and environmental resources, and a refusal to take the basic step in range management-reduction in use.

We object to this plan.

These remarks have been coordinated with William B. Morse, the Institute's Western Representative.

Sincerely,

Daniel A. Poole
President

DAP:lbb

17

United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SOUTHWEST REGION
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501

IN REPLY REFER TO

L7619(SWR-PE)

JUL 8 1982

Memorandum

To: District Manager, Socorro District, Bureau of Land Management, Socorro, New Mexico
Attention: Glenn Sekavec, EIS Staff Leader

From: Associate Regional Director, Planning and Cultural Resources, Southwest Region

Subject: Review of Draft Environmental Impact Statement for West Socorro Rangeland Management Program, Catron, Cibola, Socorro and Valencia Counties, New Mexico (DES 82/17)

We have reviewed the subject document and find that the proposed project does not appear to impact any present, proposed, or potential unit of the National Park System, the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, or the National Trails System. However, it should be noted that El Morro National Monument and a Chaco Culture Archeological Protection Site, Las Ventanas, are within the Divide Planning Area Boundary. Segments of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the Dominguez-Escalante National Historic Trail are also within the planning area.

17-1 The final statement should indicate the presence of these resources in the planning area and should discuss potential impacts, if any, and planning constraints which apply. If impacts are anticipated, please contact this office. For further information regarding El Morro National Monument, contact Superintendent Theodore W. Sullivan, El Morro National Monument, Ramah, New Mexico 87321, telephone 505-783-5132; for Chaco Culture National Historical Park and the Chaco Culture Archeological Protection Sites, contact Superintendent Walter P. Herriman, Chaco Culture National Historical Park, Star Route 4, Box 6500, Bloomfield, New Mexico 87413, telephone 505-786-5384; and for the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, contact the Regional Forester, U.S. Forest Service, Southwest Region, 517 Gold Avenue, Southwest, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87101, telephone 505-843-2401.

18

New Mexico Bureau of Mines & Mineral Resources
Socorro, NM 87801

A DIVISION OF
NEW MEXICO INSTITUTE OF MINING & TECHNOLOGY

Information 505/835-5420
Publications 505/835-5410

July 8, 1982

Glenn Sewavec
EIS Staff Leader
West Socorro Rangeland Management Program
U. S. Bureau of Land Management
Box 1219
Socorro, NM 87801

Dear Mr. Sewavec:

We realize that this management program is mainly aimed at the use of the range for grazing. However, our geologic staff has reviewed the EIS and has the following comments.

18-1 We believe the geology and minerals section is rather brief; for example, it would be helpful to have a reference map to locate the structural and topographic features mentioned in the text. The brief descriptions of the structural units and the lithologies of rock units do not appear to give enough background to properly relate to the environmental framework.

18-2 It would be helpful to have some references in your section on mineral resources as to the source of your data. Are each of the resource groups listed as only potential resources? For example, the possibility of oil and gas is a potential but there are certainly demonstrated "resources" of coal and uranium. What is the evidence of hydrothermal tin deposits? What is the evidence for geothermal source potential?

18-3 As no index map of the geologic features is included, it is difficult to tell what is the distribution of the mineral resources mentioned. For example, we know the normal geographic limits of the Acoma Sag but I doubt if many of your readers will. The geographic location of such units as the Cretaceous formations is not clear and as a matter of fact, in your paragraph two on that subject, we are not sure exactly what is the Cretaceous.

18-4 In the wilderness discussion (II-52-55), there is no index map to show the wilderness areas; thus, how can we relate these to the overall range management scheme? As the WSAs will be managed under "non-impairment" standards, this means essentially no usage from the viewpoint of minerals, it is imperative to know where the WSAs are located.

If you go with alternate one, we will volunteer to help you site your wells. The geologic background shown in the EIS is insufficient to allow you to do adequate prospecting for water. Comments have been made to us by outsiders that your efforts to locate water several years ago resulted in twelve failures out of fifteen tests.

18-5 In the minerals section, we see no mention of: 1) gold, silver, and base metal veins in the Cat Mountain area southwest of Magdalena, 2) beryllium mineralization in the Monticello Box area at the north end of the Cuchillo Mountains, 3) silver veins in the Silver Hill area northwest of Magdalena, and 4) the sandstone copper deposits in the Scholle district on the southeast flank of the Monzano Mountains. Where are the tin occurrences?

Your soil study chapter looks excellent, but we would expect this in a report that is slanted to develop the land in order to improve its value for cattle grazing.

We restate that we would be pleased to help you in decifering the occurrence of ground water.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely yours,

Frank E. Kottlowski
Director

FEK/jv

PLANNING DIVISION
(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE)
REVIEW CERTIFICATION FORM

MIS 6

STATE PLANNING DIVISION
DEPT. OF FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION
505 DON GASPAR
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO 87503
(505) 827-2073

TO: Bureau of Land Management

DATE: July 9, 1982

SUBJECT: ☐ PRELIMINARY REVIEW ☒ FINAL REVIEW ☐ STATE/AREA PLAN ☐ ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PROJECT TITLE: DEIS West Socorro Rangeland Management Program

APPLICANT: Bureau of Land Management

SAI NUMBER: NM 82 05 07 024

FEDERAL CATALOG NUMBER: 15 000

FEDERAL AGENCY: Department of Interior

PROPOSED FUNDING (PER 424 FORM)

	AMOUNT
FEDERAL	$
APPLICANT	
STATE	
LOCAL	
OTHER	
TOTAL	

FOR FINAL APPLICATION ONLY:

REVIEW RESULTS:

- ______ The application is supported.
- ______ The application is not in conflict with State, Areawide or Local plans.
- __✓__ Comments are attached for submission with this application.

LEAD AGENCY REVIEW COORDINATOR

Planning Division
AGENCY

TO THE APPLICANT:

You may now submit your application package, this form and all review comments to the Federal or State Agency(s) from whom action is being requested.

Please notify the Planning Division (Clearinghouse) of any changes in this project. Refer to the SAI number on ALL correspondence pertaining to this project.

Cecilia Perea
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

July 7, 1982
DATE

Deputy
STATE PLANNING DIVISION DIRECTOR

7/7/82
DATE

Approved July, 1979
Secretary, DFA

2 - white
1 - to applicant
1 - for Federal Agency
1 - pink - lead agency
1 - blue - Federal Funds Tracking
1 - yellow - SPD copy

OMB Approval No. 29–R0218

FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

1. Type Of Action (Mark appropriate box): ☐ Preapplication ☒ Application DEIS ☐ Notification Of Intent (Opt.) ☐ Report Of Federal Action

2. Applicant's application: a. Number: b. Date: 19 Year Month Day

3. State application identifier: a. Number: NM 82 05 07-024 b. Date Assigned: 19 82 05 07 (Year month day)

Leave Blank

Section I - Applicant / Recipient Data

4. Legal Applicant/Recipient
a. Applicant Name: Department of Interior
b. Organization Unit: Bureau of Land Management
c. Street/P.O. Box: P.O. Box 1219
d. City: Socorro
e. County: Socorro
f. State: New Mexico
g. Zip Code: 87801
h. Contact Person (Name & telephone no.): Mr. Glenn Sekavec (505) 835-0412

5. Federal Employer Identification No.: N/A

6. Program (From Federal Catalog): a. Number: 15.000 b. Title: Rangeland Management Program

7. Title and description of applicant's project:
DEIS WEST SOCORRO RANGELAND MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
This rangeland management program would implement specific management actions on 187 grazing allotments within six management categories.

8. Type of applicant/recipient
A–State G–Special Purpose District
B–Interstate H–Community Action Agency
C–Substate District I–Higher Educational Institution
D–County J–Indian Tribe
E–City K–Other
F–School District
(Specify): Enter appropriate letter: G

9. Type of assistance
A–Basic Grant D–Insurance
B–Supplemental Grant E–Other
C–Loan
Enter appropriate letter(s): A

10. Area of project impact (Names of cities, counties, states, etc.): Catron, Cibola, Socorro & Valencia Co.

11. Estimated number of persons benefiting: N/A

12. Type of application
A–New C–Revision E–Augmentation
B–Renewal D–Continuation
Enter appropriate letter: A

13. Proposed Funding

a. Federal	$ .00
b. Applicant	.00
c. State	.00
d. Local	.00
e. Other	.00
f. Total	$ .00

14. Congressional Districts Of: a. Applicant: 02 b. Project: 02

15. Type of change (For 12c or 12e)
A–Increase Dollars F–Other Specify:
B–Decrease Dollars
C–Increase Duration
D–Decrease Duration
E–Cancellation
Enter appropriate letter(s): ☐☐☐

16. Project Start Date: 19 N/A (Year month day)

17. Project Duration: N/A Months

18. Estimated date to be submitted to federal agency: 19 N/A (Year month date)

19. Existing federal identification number: N/A

20. Federal agency to receive request (Name, city, state, zip code): Department of Interior

21. Remarks added: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Section II - Certification

22. The Applicant Certifies That:
a. To the best of my knowledge and belief, data in this preapplication/application are true and correct, the document has been duly authorized by the governing body of the applicant and the applicant will comply with the attached assurances if the assistance is approved.
b. If required by OMB Circular A-95 this application was submitted, pursuant to instructions therein, to appropriate clearinghouses and all responses are attached:

	No response	Response attached
(1) New Mexico State Clearinghouse	☐	XX☒
(2)	☐	☐
(3)	☐	☐

23. Certifying representative: a. Typed name and title: b. Signature: c. Date signed: 19 (Year month day)

Section III - Federal Agency Action

24. Agency name:

25. Application received: 19 (Year month day)

26. Organizational Unit:

27. Administrative office:

28. Federal application identification:

29. Address:

30. Federal grant identification:

31. Action taken: ☐ a. Awarded ☐ b. Rejected ☐ c. Returned for amendment ☐ d. Deferred ☐ e. Withdrawn

32. Funding

a. Federal	$ .00
b. Applicant	.00
c. State	.00
d. Local	.00
e. Other	.00
f. Total	$ .00

33. Action date: 19 (Year month day)

34. Starting date: 19 (Year month day)

35. Contact for additional information (Name and telephone number):

36. Ending date: 19 (Year month day)

37. Remarks added: ☐ Yes ☐ No

38. Federal agency A–95 action:
a. In taking above action, any comments received from clearinghouses were considered. If agency response is due under provisions of Part 1, OMB Circular A-95, it has been or is being made.
b. Federal Agency A-95 Official (Name and telephone number):

424-101

Standard Form 424 Page 1 (10-75)
Prescribed by GSA, Federal Management Circular 74-7

(ALSO PLEASE COMPLETE REVERSE SIDE)

SECTION IV—REMARKS

MIS 1

STATE SUPPLEMENT TO STANDARD FEDERAL FORM 424

1. Is continuation of program anticipated?
   Yes_____ No_____ Unknown X
2. Source of funds: _____direct from the federal government _____indirect through an intermediary. If indirect, specify source [illegible]
3. Have you applied for any other funds for this project: Yes_____ No X
   If yes, please list:_____
4. Number of positions that will be funded by this program/grant. Total positions -0-
   How many permanent status:_____ How many term status_____
5. Estimate the total personnel costs including benefits for the program/grant for the
   current year: $_____
   next year: $_____
6. Will subgrants be made under this program/grant? Yes_____ No X
7. Is a State Plan required: Yes_____ No X Is a Regional Plan required: Yes_____ No X Is a City Comprehensive Plan required: Yes_____ No X
8. List the Sub-state Clearinghouses to which this application has been submitted for review:
   - _____San Juan Regional Committee
   - X Southwest New Mexico Council of Governments
   - _____McKinley Area COG
   - _____Eastern Plains Council of Governments
   - X Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments
   - _____North Central New Mexico Economic Development District
   - _____Southeastern New Mexico Economic Development District
   - X Southern Rio Grande Council of Governments
9. Are there matching requirements: Yes_____ No X If yes, indicate
   _____% Federal_____% State_____% Local
10. Are the matching ratios expected to change in future years:
    _____Yes X No; Indicate expected changes: State Increase_____, State Decrease_____,
    Local Increase_____; Local Decrease_____.
11. Is Indirect Cost Recovery allowed under this program/grant:
    _____Yes X No; Does your entity have an indirect cost recovery plan that covers this grant:
    Yes_____ No X
12. Source of Funds for Matching:

STATE:	MUNICIPAL:	COUNTY:
General Fund_____	General Fund_____	General Fund_____
Dedicated Funds_____	Dedicated Funds_____	Dedicated Funds_____
Other_____	Other_____	Other_____

2 - white
1 - for applicant to send with application to Fed. Agency
1 - Review Div.
1 - yellow - SPD copy
1 - pink - COG's copy
1 - goldenrod - applicant copy

Approved July, 1978
Secretary, DFA

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b

PLANNING DIVISION
(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE)
MIS-4
Review and Comment

DATE: 5-7-82

TO: Kate Wickes, Natural Resources Department

FROM: David F. Martinez, Planning Bureau

RE: NM 82 05 07-024 — SAI NUMBER
DEIS Socorro (West) Rangeland Management Program — PROJECT TITLE

Planning Division — LEAD AGENCY

Please review and comment on the above application and return to the sender by 6-7-82.

1. Does this plan duplicate any programs which have similar goals and objectives to the proposed application?
   _____Yes (If yes, please identify these programs.)
   X No
2. Does the proposed application conform with a comprehensive plan developed for the area in which it is located?
   _____Not applicable
   X Yes
   _____No (If no, please explain in what way it is not compatible.)
3. Does the proposed application conflict with any applicable statute, order, rule, or regulation (federal, state or local)?
   _____Yes (If yes, please cite the conflicting statute, order, rule or regulation.)
   X No
4. Describe any suggestions or means of improving or strengthening the proposed application.

   It seems unlikely, even though figures reflect it, that grazing and quality of vegetative cover can be increased simultaneously.

_____No interest in, or comment on, this project.
X Proposal is supported.
_____Proposal is supported with recommendations.
_____Proposal is not supported.
_____Further information needed, review suspended and applicant notified of request.
_____Comments attached.

On the basis of my review, I have indicated my response and/or recommendations above.

Signature of Reviewer

Planner
Title

6/2/82
Date

Natural Resources Department
Agency

Approved July, 1979
Secretary, DFA

1 - white - to applicant
1 - yellow - SPD copy
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1 - lead agency
1 - review division

c

PLANNING DIVISION
(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE)
MIS-4
Review and Comment

DATE: 5-7-82

TO: Mark Jones, Environmental Improvement Division

FROM: David F. Martinez, Planning Bureau

RE: NM 82 05 07-024 — DEIS West Socorro Rangeland Management Program
SAI NUMBER — PROJECT TITLE

Planning Division
LEAD AGENCY

Please review and comment on the above application and return to the sender by 6-7-82

1. Does this plan duplicate any programs which have similar goals and objectives to the proposed application?
   ___ Yes (If yes, please identify these programs.)
   ___ No
   _X_ Unknown

2. Does the proposed application conform with a comprehensive plan developed for the area in which it is located?
   ___ Not applicable
   ___ Yes
   ___ No (If no, please explain in what way it is not compatible.)
   _X_ Unknown

3. Does the proposed application conflict with any applicable statute, order, rule, or regulation (federal, state or local)?
   ___ Yes (If yes, please cite the conflicting statute, order, rule or regulation.)
   _X_ No

4. Describe any suggestions or means of improving or strengthening the proposed application.

_X_ No interest in, or comment on, this project.
___ Proposal is supported.
___ Proposal is supported with recommendations.
___ Proposal is not supported.
___ Further information needed, review suspended and applicant notified of request.
___ Comments attached.

On the basis of my review, I have indicated my response and/or recommendations above.

Mark M Jones
Signature of Reviewer

Environmental Review Coordinator
Title

June 9, 1982
Date

Environmental Improvement Division
Agency

Approved July, 1979
Secretary, DFA

1 - white - to applicant
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2 - pink
1 - lead agency
1 - review division

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d

PLANNING DIVISION
(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE)
MIS-4
Review and Comment

DATE: 5-7-82

TO: Jack Pearce, State Land Office

FROM: David F. Martinez, Planning Bureau

RE: NM 82 05 07 024 — DEIS West Socorro Rangeland Management Program
SAI NUMBER — PROJECT TITLE

Planning Division
LEAD AGENCY

Please review and comment on the above application and return to the sender by ~~6-7-82~~ 6-21-82

1. Does this plan duplicate any programs which have similar goals and objectives to the proposed application?
   ___ Yes (If yes, please identify these programs.)
   _X_ No

2. Does the proposed application conform with a comprehensive plan developed for the area in which it is located?
   ___ Not applicable
   _X_ Yes
   ___ No (If no, please explain in what way it is not compatible.)

3. Does the proposed application conflict with any applicable statute, order, rule, or regulation (federal, state or local)?
   ___ Yes (If yes, please cite the conflicting statute, order, rule or regulation.)
   _X_ No

4. Describe any suggestions or means of improving or strengthening the proposed application.

_X_ No interest in, or comment on, this project.
___ Proposal is supported.
___ Proposal is supported with recommendations.
___ Proposal is not supported.
___ Further information needed, review suspended and applicant notified of request.
___ Comments attached.

On the basis of my review, I have indicated my response and/or recommendations above.

Eddie W. Ortiz
Signature of Reviewer

Asst. Director Field Division
Title

6-14-82
Date

N.M. State Land Office
Agency

Approved July, 1979
Secretary, DFA

1 - white - to applicant
1 - yellow - SPD copy
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1 - lead agency
1 - review division

e

PLANNING DIVISION
(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE)
MIS-4
Review and Comment

DATE: 5-7-82

TO: S.E. Reynolds, State Engineer, Water Resources Division

FROM: David F. Martinez, Planning Bureau

RE: NM 82 05 07-024 DEIS West Socorro Rangeland Management Program
SAI NUMBER PROJECT TITLE

Planning Division
LEAD AGENCY

Please review and comment on the above application and return to the sender by 6-7-82

1. Does this plan duplicate any programs which have similar goals and objectives to the proposed application?
   _____Yes (If yes, please identify these programs.)
   _____No

2. Does the proposed application conform with a comprehensive plan developed for the area in which it is located?
   _____Not applicable
   _____Yes
   _____No (If no, please explain in what way it is not compatible.)

3. Does the proposed application conflict with any applicable statute, order, rule, or regulation (federal, state or local)?
   _____Yes (If yes, please cite the conflicting statute, order, rule or regulation.)
   _____No

4. Describe any suggestions or means of improving or strengthening the proposed application.

_____No interest in, or comment on, this project.
_____Proposal is supported.
_____Proposal is supported with recommendations.
_____Proposal is not supported.
_____Further information needed, review suspended and applicant notified of request.
__X__Comments attached.

On the basis of my review, I have indicated my response and/or recommendations above.

Signature of Reviewer

Chief - Water Rights Division
Title

June 18, 1982
Date

State Engineer
Agency

Approved July, 1979
Secretary, DFA

1 - white - to applicant
1 - yellow - SPD copy
2 - pink
1 - lead agency
1 - review division

The following editorial changes are suggested.

Page I-30

e-1 State Engineer
On third line I would suggest deleting "a formal water right" and insert "permit from the State Engineer".

e-2 Delete last word on third line "water" and first word on fourth line "right" and insert "permit".

Page II-6

e-3 1st paragraph under Ground water
On the fourth line between the words "with" and "the" insert "and approved by".

f

PLANNING DIVISION
(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE)
MIS-4
Review and Comment

DATE: 5-7-82

TO: Charles H. Greene, Agriculture Department

FROM: David F. Martinez, Planning Bureau

RE: NM 82 05 07 024 DEIS West Socorro Rangeland Management Program
SAI NUMBER PROJECT TITLE

Planning Division
LEAD AGENCY

Please review and comment on the above application and return to the sender by 6-7-82.

1. Does this plan duplicate any programs which have similar goals and objectives to the proposed application?
   ____ Yes (If yes, please identify these programs.)
   XX No

2. Does the proposed application conform with a comprehensive plan developed for the area in which it is located?
   XX Not applicable
   ____ Yes
   ____ No (If no, please explain in what way it is not compatible.)

3. Does the proposed application conflict with any applicable statute, order, rule, or regulation (federal, state or local)?
   XX Yes (If yes, please cite the conflicting statute, order, rule or regulation.)
   ____ No

   Conflicts with New Mexico Statute: Chapter 19, Article 15, Section 2, NMSA - 1978

4. Describe any suggestions or means of improving or strengthening the proposed application.

   Comments on behalf of the Secretary of Agriculture will be submitted to the BLM at a later date.

____ No interest in, or comment on, this project.
____ Proposal is supported.
X Proposal is supported with recommendations, [illegible]
____ Proposal is not supported.
____ Further information needed, review suspended and applicant notified of request.
____ Comments attached.

On the basis of my review, I have indicated my response and/or recommendations above.

Signature of Reviewer

Chief, Administrative Services
Title

June 15, 1982
Date

New Mexico Department of Agriculture
Agency

Approved July, 1979
Secretary, DFA

1 - white - to applicant
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2 - pink
1 - lead agency
1 - review division

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g

PLANNING DIVISION
(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE)
MIS-4
Review and Comment

DATE: 5-7-82

TO: Patricia Romero, Commerce & Industry Department

FROM: David F. Martinez, Planning Bureau

RE: NM 82 05 07-024 DEIS West Socorro Rangeland Management Program
SAI NUMBER PROJECT TITLE

Planning Bureau
LEAD AGENCY

Please review and comment on the above application and return to the sender by 6-7-82

1. Does this plan duplicate any programs which have similar goals and objectives to the proposed application?
   ____ Yes (If yes, please identify these programs.)
   X No

2. Does the proposed application conform with a comprehensive plan developed for the area in which it is located?
   ____ Not applicable
   X Yes
   ____ No (If no, please explain in what way it is not compatible.)

3. Does the proposed application conflict with any applicable statute, order, rule, or regulation (federal, state or local)?
   ____ Yes (If yes, please cite the conflicting statute, order, rule or regulation.)
   X No

4. Describe any suggestions or means of improving or strengthening the proposed application.

____ No interest in, or comment on, this project.
X Proposal is supported.
____ Proposal is supported with recommendations.
____ Proposal is not supported.
____ Further information needed, review suspended and applicant notified of request.
____ Comments attached.

On the basis of my review, I have indicated my response and/or recommendations above.

Patricia A. Romero
Signature of Reviewer

Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Industry
Title

May 28, 1982
Date

Commerce and Industry Department
Agency

Approved July, 1979
Secretary, DFA

1 - white - to applicant
1 - yellow - SPD c
2 - pink
1 - lead agency
1 - review division

PLANNING DIVISION
(STATE CLEARINGHOUSE)
MIS-4
Review and Comment

DATE: 5-7-82

TO: Harold F. Olson, Game and Fish Department

FROM: David F. Martinez, Planning Bureau

RE: NM 82 05 07-024 — SAI NUMBER
DEIS West Socorro Rangeland Management Program — PROJECT TITLE

Planning Division — LEAD AGENCY

Please review and comment on the above application and return to the sender by 6-7-82

1. Does this plan duplicate any programs which have similar goals and objectives to the proposed application?
   - _____Yes (If yes, please identify these programs.)
   - _X_No

2. Does the proposed application conform with a comprehensive plan developed for the area in which it is located?
   - _____Not applicable
   - _X_Yes
   - _____No (If no, please explain in what way it is not compatible.)

3. Does the proposed application conflict with any applicable statute, order, rule, or regulation (federal, state or local)?
   - _____Yes (If yes, please cite the conflicting statute, order, rule or regulation.)
   - _X_No

4. Describe any suggestions or means of improving or strengthening the proposed application.

- _____No interest in, or comment on, this project.
- _X_Proposal is supported.
- _____Proposal is supported with recommendations.
- _____Proposal is not supported.
- _____Further information needed, review suspended and applicant notified of request.
- _____Comments attached.

On the basis of my review, I have indicated my response and/or recommendations above.

Signature of Reviewer

June 3, 1982
Date

Federal Aid Coordinator
Title

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
Agency

Approved July, 1979
Secretary, DFA

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1 - review division

United States Department of the Interior

MINERALS MANAGEMENT SERVICE
RESTON, VA 22091

In Reply Refer To:
MMS-Mail Stop 650

8 JUL 1982

Memorandum

To: Glenn Sekavec, EIS Staff Leader
Bureau of Land Management
Socorro, New Mexico

From: Acting Associate Director, Onshore Minerals Operations

Subject: Review of Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program, New Mexico

20-1 The Minerals Management Service has reviewed the subject draft environmental impact statement (DEIS), and we feel that implementation of the recommended program or any of the alternatives considered should have no additional impact on mineral leasing, exploration, or development. [However, the three paragraphs on page II-2, under Geology and Minerals, although accurate, are excessively brief and superficial. This section should be augmented at least by a generalized geologic map showing principal areas or locations of mineral potential.]

20-2 [The report does not include a statement of any change in policy toward minerals resources in the study area. By this omission, we presume no changes have been intended. We feel a brief statement regarding mineral policy would be appropriate, perhaps in chapter III, Environmental Consequences.]

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this DEIS.

Andrew V. Bailey
Andrew V. Bailey

21

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Field Supervisor
Ecological Services, USFWS
Suite C, 3530 Pan American Highway, NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87107

July 12, 1982

Memorandum

To: Mr. Glenn Sekavec, EIS Staff Leader, Bureau of Land Management, Socorro, New Mexico

From: Field Supervisor, FWS, Ecological Services, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program

The draft EIS adequately describes the Divide Planning Area (DPA) and proposed alternatives for rangeland management within the DPA. However, the discussion of impacts on fish and wildlife resources should be expanded as follows:

21-1 1. The EIS lacks a detailed analysis of the various alternatives' impacts, if any, on surface waters and water-dependent plants and animals. The preferred alternative, for example, is expected to reduce surface runoff by 21 percent in the long term, while requiring an additional 1,400 acre-feet per year from groundwater. Although this will create new surface water sources for both livestock and wildlife, locally it could impact existing watercourses, wetlands and marginal riparian habitats which are essential for a variety of birds, small mammals, reptiles and amphibians. The final EIS should more adequately address these concerns.

21-2 2. Fences and pipelines may impede migration of big game unless these structures are properly designed or sited. Specific measures to mitigate these impacts should be described in the final EIS.

21-3 3. According to the EIS, Alternative 1 (preferred), 3 (elimination of livestock grazing) and 4 (maximization of livestock forage) would have the same net benefits for big game, resulting in increases in mule deer, pronghorn, and elk populations in the DPA to 4500, 1600 and 100, respectively. Forage available for big game is expressed as Animal Unit Months (AUMs) for Alternatives 1 and 4. However, no AUMs were determined for Alternative 3. Under this alternative, all forage would be available for wildlife and the EIS should express this gain as AUMs so a direct comparison can be made with the other alternatives. A discussion of the methods used for calculating AUMs for each alternative should be included.

21-4 4. The final EIS should describe the impacts of each alternative on reptiles and amphibians.

21-5 5. Elimination of livestock grazing (Alternative 3) would have the secondary benefit of eliminating predator and rangeland pest control programs. The final EIS should state this in its discussion of impacts.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment.

Richard A. Hoppe

cc:
Director, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Santa Fe, New Mexico
Regional Director, FWS, Office of Environment, Albuquerque, New Mexico
Area Manager, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Phoenix, Arizona

22

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

BOX 3AE, LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO 88003
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

July 12, 1982

Mr. Glenn Sekavec
EIS Staff Leader
BLM District Office
P.D. Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Dear Mr. Sekavec:

The following comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program, were prepared by Range Improvement Task Force (RITF) members, Jim Gray, James Knight, and Jerry Schickedanz. RITF did not review the DEIS from a grammatical standpoint, but only for content and concepts.

As an overview, the RITF is satisfied with the document in general, however there are some minor questions. This is the first DEIS in New Mexico that RITF's comments are limited to only a few pages. We have been pleased with the coordination, consultation and cooperation that the BLM personnel have conducted both with RITF and the land users. We support the basic allotment management categories and a logical starting point for management actions in conjunction with the monitoring studies.

22-1 We question the size of the 100 acre fenced enclosures to study the potential of each range site. It has been experienced that enclosures are high maintanence projects and do not need to be this large. A 10 acre plot should be adequate for the studies.

22-2 Do the regulations require escape ramps on private water as well as public water troughs and open storage tanks?

Ranch budgets supplied by the Economic Research Service and used in the DEIS were compared against ranch budgets based on long-term studies in Northwestern New Mexico. The results were comparable, particularly in the depreciation section, which was a matter of concern in earlier EIS's.

The equity loss occurring because of reductions in authorized use and consequences of the equity loss in terms of ranch resale values and financing adequately discussed in preliminary copy, an area not adequately discussed in earlier EIS's.

New Mexico State University is an equal opportunity employer. All programs are available to everyone regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. New Mexico State University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

The procedures followed in the review and revision of the economic section in preparation of the DEIS conformed to the BLM policy of consultation, cooperation and coordination, as well as their "good neighbor" policy.

22-3 In the discussion on "Big Game Species" (II-37), it is stated that only 233,978 acres of the DPA has the capability of supporting a year round mule deer population. It should be emphasized that often those areas used seasonally are the most important. Because of this, management practices utilized become more significant especially when the mule deer population is less than optimum.

22-4 In the same section several factors are listed that "seem to be contributing to the mule deer population's less than optimum members." Included should be availability of water and predation. In many parts of the DPA, especially those areas not utilized by livestock, lack of water limits deer use of otherwise suitable areas. Predation is also a significant mortality factor that influences the total deer population. Both mountain lion and coyotes are present in the DPA and their influence should be recognized.

22-5 The importance of forage quality to mule deer is discussed. In the next paragraph these same concerns are applied to antelope. The mule deer concerns pertain primarily to browse. To apply this to antelope is an oversimplification. Forb availability and quality is as important as browse availability and quality. There is also more overlap in areas used by cattle and antelope than in areas used by cattle and deer.

22-6 We would question the statement concerning "competition" between antelope and cattle. Competition can only exist when the desired resource is limited. Have vegetation studies been conducted which indicate limited availability and overutilization of browse species? If this information is available it should be included in the EIS. The fecal studies indicate both cattle and antelope utilize browse species but we question that these studies indicated competition exists. Dietary overlap does not in itself constitute competition.

22-7 In the discussion on "Recreation" (II-55), mule deer hunting is the only type of hunting recreation included. A significant number of other visitor days could be attributed to those hunting other species such as quail, dove, antelop and coyote. Game and Fish hunter survey questionaires could possibly be utilized to estimate these numbers. The EIS should at least recognize that these visitor days exist even if the quantity cannot be determined.

22-8 In the section on "Environmental Consequences", we have some concerns regarding the pronghorn antelope discussion (III-27). The statement is made that improved "ecological condition" of the range would provide better quality and quantity of forage for antelope. On page II-10, ecological condition class is defined as "a measure of how closely the area under consideration resembles climax condition." Several studies have shown that abundant forb availability is beneficial to antelope. As climatic rangeland conditions are approached the percentage of forbs decreases. Antelope have evolved with grazing ungulates that have retarded successional advancement. Proper grazing management is of course essential but understocking could allow the range to advance successionally beyond that stage most suitable for antelope. While forage quantity is important for both cattle and antelope, quantity concerns should not overshadow the need for conditions essential to favorable vegetative composition.

If you have any further questions of which we can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

Jerry G. Schickedanz
RITF Coordinator

JGS/mgb

3- 1 See response to comment PH2-2.

3- 2 Current forage allocation within the DPA is approximately 141,600 Animal Unit Months (AUM) (Draft EIS, pages I-9 and I-15). The anticipated demand for AUMs produced on public land is 178,200 by the year 2000 (Draft EIS, pages I-9 and I-19). Implementing the No Action Alternative would not achieve this projected demand. Implementing the Preferred Alternative would achieve this demand by the year 2000 (Draft EIS, Figure I-1, page I-15) and would accomplish other resource use long-term objectives described on page I-1, I-4, and elsewhere throughout the Draft EIS. Implementing the Maximization of Livestock Forage Production Alternative would achieve this demand by approximately the year 1989.

3- 3 See response to comment 3-2.

3- 4 See response to comment 3-2.

3- 5 No livestock adjustments are proposed in conjunction with the Preferred Alternative. Table I-4 on pages I-10 through I-14 of the Draft EIS presents a range of numbers for stocking rates that would be used for initial consultation if it were determined that an adjustment in livestock numbers would be needed. The Elimination of Livestock Grazing Alternative proposes that all domestic livestock grazing on all public land administered by BLM within the DPA be immediately discontinued; livestock adjustments are not immediately proposed for any of the other alternatives under consideration within the Draft EIS.

3- 6 Fenced exclosures to determine the potential of range sites would be constructed first on the 13,671 acres of unallotted public land within the DPA administered by the BLM Socorro District. Where this is not possible, the location of fenced exclosures for study purposes would be negotiated through the consultation process and no more than one study exclosure would be established on any one allotment. The exact size of fenced exclosures may vary, as the result of the consultation process; however, larger exclosures are preferrable to ensure statistical confidence.

5- 1 Some degree of environmental manipulation is required to accomplish the objectives of the Preferred Alternative listed on pages I-1 and I-4 of the Draft EIS. Protection will be accomplished through adherence to the Standard Operating Procedures listed on pages I-22 and I-23 and elsewhere throughout the Draft EIS. In order for vegetative land treatments to be implemented, they must have an acceptable benefit-to-cost ratio, as explained on page I-21 and elsewhere throughout the Draft EIS.

5- 2 The Draft EIS was prepared under the ecological site concept that no one part of an ecosystem functions independently of another. In BLM's judgment the proposed action will result in improved ecological condition classes which will serve to accomplish the desired objectives listed on pages I-1 and I-4 and elsewhere throughout the Draft EIS.

5- 3 To facilitate wildlife habitat analyses all public land within the DPA was divided into dominant vegetation and landforms call Habitat Sites (HS). Groupings of like HS's were identified as Standard Habitat Sites (SHS) for purposes of inventory and information analyses (Draft EIS, page II-31). The plant species that dominate each of the seven SHS's within the DPA are described on pages II-31 through II-36 of the Draft EIS. The importance of the vegetation within each SHS to the animal species found within is described on pages II-31 through II-36 of the Draft EIS. An analysis of impacts, inherent to each alternative under consideration, on wildlife species or groups of species known to occur in the DPA such as small birds, small mammals, big game, and raptors is discussed in relation to each SHS and separately. This analysis is found on pages III-22 through III-32 of the Draft EIS.

5- 4 Adherence to criteria No. 7 on page I-21 of the Draft EIS would ensure that pinyon-juniper control would be compatible with other multiple-use resource objectives; i.e., Forest Management. The method of pinyon-juniper control would be dependent upon an acceptable benefit-to-cost ratio (Draft EIS, page I-21, criteria No. 1); therefore, fuelwood cutting may be the most beneficial method of control. The BLM Planning Documents, described on pages E-1 through E-3 and elsewhere throughout the Draft EIS, have identified those specific areas within the DPA that are suitable and open for public timber harvest. Adherence to Standard Operating Procedure No. 16 on page I-23 of the Draft EIS would produce the greatest "edge effect" possible as the result of vegetative land treatments, and would assist, in part, in accomplishing the desired wildlife objectives described on page I-4 and elsewhere within the Draft EIS.

7- 1 Assurances against any possible overgrazing are provided in the Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter II, Subchapter D, Part 4100, Sec. 4110.3-2 which states, in part, that "when authorized grazing use exceeds the amount of forage available for livestock grazing within an allotment on a temporary basis: (1) Due to drought... grazing permits or leases may be suspended in whole or in part". The Preferred Alternative allows flexibility through the consultation process and rangeland monitoring studies, to prevent overgrazing during periods of unseasonal drought, through manipulation of management actions inherent to each management category.

8- 1 Chapter II of the Draft EIS (page II-56) states that "all of the above mentioned current uses" (roads, viz., current legal access patterns) "and potential future uses are compatible with the livestock grazing industry..." For this reason, the subject of access of Native Americans to traditional religious sites was not evaluated in Chapter III (Environmental Consequences) of the Draft EIS.

9- 1 The Preferred Alternative is designed to improve wildlife habitat and provide for watershed protection needs, as well. These multiple-use objectives are further described on pages I-1, I-4, I-9, and elsewhere throughout the Draft EIS.

9- 2 The BLM Planning Documents for the DPA, described on pages E-1 through E-3 and elsewhere throughout the Draft EIS, have allocated discrete public land areas to specific land-use combinations to comply with the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. The grazing allotments identified within the Draft EIS have been deemed as being the best use for public lands administered by the BLM Socorro District in conjunction with other identified resource uses.

9- 3 The expenditure of approximately $7 million, through the long term, would be to implement all features of the Preferred Alternative described on pages I-4 through I-23 of the Draft EIS. This expenditure is not intended as a public subsidy to livestock operators within the DPA; it would be expended for the purpose of improving rangeland condition to accomplish the objectives described on page I-4 of the Draft EIS.

9- 4 See response to comment 5-4. In addition, lands under wilderness review would be managed in a manner that would not impair the area's suitability as wilderness (Draft EIS, Standard Operating Procedure No. 9, pages I-23 and III-38). Proposed maximum areas for vegetative land treatments under Alternatives 1 and 4 are illustrated on pages I-20 and I-27, respectively. These proposed treatment areas can be correlated to the Wilderness Study Area descriptions contained in BLM's New Mexico Wilderness Study Area Decisions (BLM New Mexico State Office 1980) (Draft EIS, page R-5). This document is available for public review in the BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS Files.

9- 5 See response to comment 5-4.

9- 6 The bald eagle does winter, and the American peregrine falcon has been reported within the DPA (Draft EIS, page II-42). Herbicide use would be conducted in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures Nos. 6, 7, and 8 (Draft EIS, pages I-22 and I-23) to preclude any environmental impact on these species. Only herbicides approved for use by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of the Interior, and the New Mexico State Department of Agriculture would be utilized at approved application rates (Draft EIS, pages I-21, I-22, and III-11).

9- 7 The BLM Planning Documents (Draft EIS, page E-1), Wildlife Habitat, have identified that no vegetative land treatments would be conducted in the locations or during seasons of ground bird nesting activity. This will be accomplished through adherence to criteria No. 7 (Draft EIS, page I-21) and Standard Operating Procedures Nos. 7, 15, and 16 (Draft EIS, pages I-22 and I-23).

9- 8 See responses to comments 5-3 and 5-4.

10- 1 The Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement (PMOA), January 14, 1980, Between The Advisory Council On Historic Preservation (ACHP), The National Conference Of State Historic Preservation Officers, And The Bureau Of Land Management Regarding The Livestock Grazing And Range Improvement Program, requires, in part, that BLM conduct Class I and Class II (see Draft EIS, page GL-2 for description) inventories of historic and cultural properties prior to preparation of grazing EIS's. The PMOA states that this inventory requirement may be modified on a case-by-case basis if an alternative is acceptable to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). Through subsequent negotiations, it was mutually agreed with Mr. Thomas W. Merlan, New Mexico SHPO, that a Class II inventory of the Quemado Planning Unit would suffice to fulfill the requirements of the PMOA for adequate description of the historic and cultural properties of the DPA.

Four Class I inventories were prepared (Draft EIS, page II-48) to encompass the entire DPA. Then, per the above agreement with the SHPO, a Class II inventory was conducted on the Quemado Planning Unit. This information was utilized to prepare planning documents (Draft EIS, pages II-1 and E-1 through E-3) on all four planning units that analyzed and recorded the use, problems, trend, and quality of historic and cultural properties of the DPA, as well as management opportunities to improve, enhance, and protect these properties (BLM no longer recognizes planning units but resource areas as boundaries for planning and resource management). BLM does not feel that a repetition of this information was warranted for inclusion in the Draft EIS. Maps depicting these properties within each of the four planning units were also prepared on a larger scale than those in the Draft EIS, permitting greater detailed examination.

The above information is not routinely placed in documents disseminated for public review because of the sensitivity of historical and cultural site locations. These inventories and planning documents are available for review in the BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS Files only by qualified, professional archaeologists. Specific BLM instruction as to disclosure of such information can be found in BLM Washington Office Instruction Memorandum 80-578 dated June 12, 1980; this can also be examined in the Planning/EIS Files.

10- 2 Since the level of intensity of grazing management for each allotment within the DPA has not been determined, it is not specifically known how many, what type, or where rangeland improvements and vegetative land treatments would be conducted. The possible effects of these actions cannot be evaluated, and thus quantified, until site-specific (Draft EIS, pages I-23 and II-50) field inventories (Class III inventories - Draft EIS, page GL-2) are conducted on all areas that would be impacted by range management activities prior to their implementation. To currently attempt to evaluate the effects of the alternatives under consideration would provide meaningless information.

10- 3 Page III-36 of the Draft EIS states that BLM would conduct intensive field inventories (Class III- See Draft EIS, page GL-2) of specific areas that would be impacted by implementing any proposed rangeland improvement or vegetative land treatment project prior to its approval.

10- 4 Adverse impacts, as defined in BLM Manual 8100 (which sets forth the objectives of the cultural resource management program to inventory, evaluate, plan, and manage cultural resources on lands administered by BLM) is any action or undertaking which causes or may cause an adverse change to the existing character of a cultural resource property. Adverse impacts are further defined in 36 CFR 800 for the elucidation of all Federal agencies, and Federally assisted or Federally licensed undertakings affecting cultural properties as, in part, the destruction or alteration of all or part of a property; isolation from or alteration of its surrounding environment; transfer or sale of a Federally-owned property without adequate conditions or restrictions regarding preservation, maintenance, or use; and neglect of a property resulting in its deterioration or destruction. BLM considers all of the above as adverse actions and would not permit such to occur. To this end, the Draft EIS states in several instances that, should cultural or historical properties be identified during Class III inventories of areas proposed for construction of rangeland improvements or vegetative land treatments, every effort would be made to avoid adverse effects. The Programmatic Memorandum of Agreement, Between The Advisory Council On Historic Preservation, The National Conference Of State Historic Preservation Officers, And The BLM Regarding The Livestock Grazing And Range Improvement Program, allows that, where it is not prudent or feasible to avoid adverse effects, BLM will consult with the New Mexico State Historic Preservation Officer to develop mutually acceptable measures to mitigate the impact of the proposed action.

10- 5 See response to comment 10-2.

10- 6 See response to comment 10-1.

10- 7 See response to comment 10-1.

10- 8 See response to comment 10-4.

10- 9 See response to comment 10-2.

10-10 See response to comment 10-2.

10-11 See response to comment 10-4.

10-12 See response to comment 10-2.

12- 1 The BLM Planning Documents described on page E-1 and elsewhere throughout the Draft EIS describe the use, problems, productivity, trend and quality of the resources of Lands, Minerals, Forestry, Range Management, Watershed, Wildlife Habitat, Recreation, Cultural Resource Management, Visual Resource Management, and Wilderness. These Planning Documents also analyze all management opportunities to improve, enhance, and increase the use, production, trend, quality, or to protect these resources. The BLM Socorro District made repeated attempts to involve the public during development of these BLM Planning Documents for the DPA; a partial listing of this interface is listed on pages IV-1 through IV-5 of the Draft EIS. All information (including data regarding resource conflicts, current use patterns, and potential range conditions) received by the BLM Socorro District during the public participation process was fully utilized during development of these Planning Documents and the Draft EIS.

12- 2 The success of implementing the Preferred Alternative is based entirely upon the Section 8 (Public Rangelands Improvement Act) consultation, cooperation, and coordination process. This process will be fully utilized on each allotment before decisions are processed. This process is described on page I-18 of the Draft EIS.

12- 3 Ecological range condition ratings were utilized as estimates to facilitate convenience of computation for the environmental consequences of each alternative under consideration. It is well recognized that the most productive rangeland communities may often be below climax. The ultimate goal may not be a climax situation for each range site but a plant community below the climax stage, as discussed on pages III-12 and III-22 of the Draft EIS.

12- 4 The Draft EIS states (pages I-23 and II-55) that the entire 356,190 acres of land under wilderness review in the DPA would be managed to preserve existing natural values according to the non-impairment standards set forth in BLM's Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review. Pages I-23 and III-38 of the Draft EIS state that these lands would be managed to ensure that wilderness values are not degraded by allowed grazing use or management actions to support that grazing use.

12- 5 The Draft EIS could have been more explicit in that the herbicide application rates, described on page I-21 of the Draft EIS and elsewhere, are for pounds per acre active ingredient. The Errata Section clarifies this comment. In addition, page I-31 of the Draft EIS further outlines the consultation that will be undertaken prior to herbicide application.

15- 1 Management actions, inherent to each management category, are discussed on pages I-4 and I-5 and are illustrated in Table I-2, page I-5 of the Draft EIS. They are reiterated on pages E-5 through E-9 for further emphasis.

15- 2 In order for any vegetative land treatment to be implemented, it must exhibit an acceptable benefit-to-cost ratio. This is explained on pages I-6 and I-21 of the Draft EIS.

15- 3 Page I-21 of the Draft EIS states that the BLM Socorro District proposes to conduct seeding trials on 2-acre plots on each of the 33 range sites within the DPA to augment limited data regarding proper plant species and seed mix for a given range site. In addition, see response to comment 15-2.

15- 4 Clarification has been provided in the Errata Section of the Final EIS. See also page II-43 of the Draft EIS and the Biological Assessment, Appendix D, of the Final EIS for further explanation.

15- 5 Any management actions would be determined on a site-specific basis by allotment for each riparian or wetland area through the consultation process. Subsequent analyses (Draft EIS, page I-22) would be conducted to address any localized impact in order to comply with Executive Orders 11988 (Floodplain Management) and 11990 (Protection of Wetlands). The management plan for the proposed Bluewater Canyon Area of Critical Environmental Concern is currently being prepared by the BLM Socorro District. This plan will outline measures to restore and protect riparian vegetation and will be available for public review in the BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS Files.

15- 6 Proposed vegetative land treatments (Maps I-2 and I-3, Draft EIS, pages I-20 and I-27, respectively) all occur within mule deer and/or pronghorn antelope use areas (Maps II-4 and II-5, Draft EIS, pages II-39 and II-40, respectively). Seedings of these use areas shall consist of a minimum proportionate ratio of 20-percent forbs and 20-percent browse and these seed mixtures shall consist of not less than two species of forbs and browse in order to avoid problems associated with monocultures (Draft EIS, page I-21, criteria Nos. 5, 6, and 7) and increase forb quality. Within the scope of analysis of the Draft EIS, forage quality can be improved by eliminating continuous grazing and manipulating seasonal management of domestic livestock. The Management Framework Plan (Draft EIS, pages E-1, E-2, and elsewhere) for the DPA describes actions, not evaluated within the Scope of the Draft EIS, that include wildlife habitat management in and for itself. These management actions include, in part, browse improvement projects, wildlife water developments, exotic animal species removal, construction of fence modifications to facilitate localized movement, etc. The Management Framework Plan is available for public review in the BLM Socorro District. Acreages of public land within each management category by SHS can be ascertained by comparing Visual A in the map pocket in the back of the Draft EIS, Tables E-2 and E-3 on pages E-15 through E-22 of the Draft EIS, and Map II-3 (page II-34 of the Draft EIS), Standard Habitat Sites within the DPA.

16- 1 The long-term objectives of the BLM Socorro District, that are expected to result through implementation of the Preferred Alternative, are listed on pages I-1 and I-4 of the Draft EIS. The achievement of these objectives will complement the long-term goals of the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish.

16- 2 The quality and type of forage is dependent upon particular vegetative communities as related to range sites (Draft EIS, pages II-9 through II-30) and each SHS. This is specified within the Draft EIS by correlating range site descriptions (Draft EIS, pages II-9 through II-30) to SHS descriptions (Draft EIS, pages II-31 through II-37 and pages III-22 through III-32).

16- 3 No critical habitat (in reference to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended) has been designated within the DPA. The Multiple-Use Analysis Process (described on page E-3 of the Draft EIS) moved 16 grazing allotments, within the DPA, from Management Category F to Management Category D because of seasonal competition between wild ungulates and domestic livestock and special wildlife use and concentration areas. This action has resolved these controversies. Adherence to Standard Operating Procedure No. 15 (Draft EIS, page I-23) will preclude environmental impact within riparian or other wetland areas.

16- 4 The 36,600-AUM increase is correct. However, Figure I-1 (Draft EIS, page I-15) illustrates that 9,949 AUMs would be allocated exclusively for wildlife use. Page I-9 of the Draft EIS states that wildlife forage would be proportionally allocated on an allotment-by-allotment basis as range condition improves, prior to being allocated to domestic livestock. The total expenditure ($7,148,000) over the long term, is for, in part, implementation of all management actions, rangeland monitoring and wildlife habitat monitoring, rangeland improvements, and a maximum estimated amount of vegetative land treatments inherent to the Preferred Alternative (pages I-4 through I-24 of the Draft EIS). This represents a maximum expenditure of $10.85 per AUM over the long-term project life. This expenditure also does not provide for any consideration of assumption No. 13 of the Draft EIS (page III-3) nor of the benefits derived from other resource use objectives described on page I-4.

16- 5 See response to comment 16-4.

17- 1 Chapter II of the Draft EIS (page II-1) states that the descriptions of various resource components are only as detailed as is necessary to understand the effects of the alternatives under consideration. Chapter III of the Draft EIS (page III-1) states that the absence of discussion of impacts indicates that analysis either determined that an impact would not occur or that it would be insignificant. For this reason, no documentation of these resources occurs.

18- 1 See response to comment 17-1. Also for this reason, no documentation of the components of Geology and Minerals appeared in Chapter III (Environmental Consequences) of the Draft EIS. Page E-1, and elsewhere throughout the Draft EIS, describes the development of BLM Planning Documents. The Unit Resource Analysis (Draft EIS, pages II-1 and E-1) prepared for the geological features and mineral resources of the DPA describes the current uses, problems, productivity, trend, and quality of these items, as well as, an analysis of all technologically feasible management opportunities to improve or enhance the use, production, or quality of these resources. Overlays illustrating the present situation and management opportunities have been prepared as well. See page II-1 of the Draft EIS for a list of other planning documents available that also describe these resources. These documents are available for public review in the BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS Files.

18- 2 See response to comment 18-1.

18- 3 See response to comment 18-1.

18- 4 See response to comment 18-1. In addition, the New Mexico Wilderness Study Area Decisions document (page R-5 of the Draft EIS) contains maps of all Wilderness Study Areas within New Mexico. This document is available for public review in the BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS Files.

18- 5 See response to comment 18-1.

19e-1 This suggested change has been made in the Errata, Modifications, and Additions to the Draft EIS Section.

19e-2 See response to comment 19e-1.

19e-3 See response to comment 19e-1.

20- 1 See response to comments 17-1 and 18-1.

20- 2 The proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program would not affect any facet of mineral exploration, development, or production; therefore, a statement in reference to mineral policy would be inappropriate for inclusion in the Draft EIS.

21- 1 The Preferred Alternative would reduce surface runoff by improving the water-holding capabilities of the soil by, in part, improving ground cover and vegetation. The 21-percent reduction of runoff is not a lost water resource. Typical thunderstorm patterns (Draft EIS, page II-1) inundate the DPA and most runoff occurs as flash floods. In effect, this reduction of runoff will slow down the rate of surface flow through riparian and other wetland areas resulting in an overall beneficial impact. In addition, the majority of the approximately 2,500 acres of riparian and wetland habitat, located on public lands within the DPA, is associated with wells, springs, and stock tanks (Draft EIS, page II-43).

21- 2 Standard Operating Procedure No. 3 (Draft EIS, page I-22) provides for, in part, wildlife considerations during the construction of standard specification fences within various wildlife habitats. Standard 2-inch pipelines used by BLM would normally be buried, thereby not impeding wildlife movement.

21- 3 If Alternative 3 (Elimination of Livestock Grazing) is implemented, there would be no allocation process. As illustrated in Figure I-1 (Draft EIS, page I-15) all existing 141,600 AUMs would be available for the exclusive use of wildlife, watershed, or other resource uses. AUMs were calculated in accordance with analysis guideline No. 7 on page III-2 of the Draft EIS.

21- 4 See response to comment 17-1.

21- 5 The elimination of domestic livestock grazing on public lands would not, in itself, eliminate the predator or rodent control program. Livestock operator initiated requests for predator or rodent control would, theoretically, cease if Alternative 3 were implemented. However, BLM or other Federal or State agencies would continue to make requests to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for predator or rodent control if such control would provide demonstrated benefit to other resource uses; e.g., wildlife, watershed, etc. For this reason, neither the beneficial nor detrimental impacts of eliminating predator or rodent control were evaluated within the scope of the Draft EIS.

22- 1 See response to comment 3-6.

22- 2 The escape ramp requirement of Standard Operating Procedure No. 14 (Draft EIS, page I-23) is applicable only to those water troughs and open storage tanks placed on public land administered by the BLM Socorro District (See also analysis guideline No. 5, Draft EIS, page III-2).

22- 3 The statement that mule deer may be found throughout the DPA refers to occasional use. The 233,978 acres identified as year-long mule deer habitat includes some areas used seasonally as well as important concentration areas. It should be noted that eight allotments were moved from Management Category F to D (Draft EIS, pages III-27 and E-3) because of special management practices needed in areas of seasonal mule deer utilization.

22- 4 While BLM agrees that water availability and predation are two factors which contribute to the DPA's less than optimum mule deer population, only those factors of rangeland management within the scope of anlysis of the Draft EIS were included. BLM's wildlife habitat management program, which is not addressed by the Draft EIS, will continue to improve wildlife waters throughout the DPA (DPA, URA, and MFP 1981; Draft EIS, pages II-1 and E-1). The factor of predation by both the mountain lion and coyote is also beyond the scope of analysis of the Draft EIS; however, it is felt that Animal Damage Control programs of appropriate local, State and Federal agencies will continue to benefit mule deer populations, as well as livestock management.

22- 5 The discussion on page II-37 of the Draft EIS pertains primarily to browse, while the discussion in the first paragraph of page II-38 indicates the importance of forbs.

22- 6 The term competition on pages II-37 and II-38 is used in the context of limited forage. Fecal analysis studies conducted on common big game - livestock utilization areas are also accompanied by vegetation studies. The vegetative resources of the DPA are presented in the text and appendix of the Draft EIS and are adequate to facilitate quantification of both vegetation diversity and availability to ungulates.

22- 7 A discussion of quail, dove, antelope, and coyote hunting within the DPA is contained in various Unit Resource Analysis and Planning Area Analysis (Draft EIS, pages II-1 and E-1). These documents are available for public review in the BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS Files. BLM recognizes that hunting the above mentioned species is a very popular form of recreation; however, the use is casual and accurate use figures are not available. For this reason, BLM felt that positive correlation could not be shown between any of the alternatives under consideration in the Draft EIS and these forms of recreation.

22- 8 The discussion on page III-27 of the Draft EIS takes into consideration the fact that the majority of pronghorn antelope habitat within the DPA is in fair ecological condition class and in need of improvement. In addition, see response to comment 12-3.

ERRATA, MODIFICATIONS, AND ADDITIONS TO THE DRAFT EIS

INTRODUCTION

This section contains revisions made to the Draft EIS. These revisions are based on new or more complete information identified through the public review process and changes in BLM guidance since release of the Draft EIS.

ERRATA

The following changes, to be incorporated into the Draft EIS, are of an editorial nature and relatively minor. Consequently, the affected pages have not been reprinted in full. References to Paragraph 1 (para.) indicate the first full paragraph on a page. If no paragraph is cited, the change will be found in the first partial paragraph on the page.

Page I-21, line 2. Revise first full sentence as follows. "Graslan and Tordon 10k would be applied at rates consistent with the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (86 Stat. 973-999, as amended; 7 U.S.C. 136 et seq.); i.e., to apply herbicides in a manner consistent with labeling."

Page I-30, para. 5, line 3. Delete "a formal water right" and insert "a permit from the State Engineer".

Page I-30, para. 5, lines 3 and 4. Delete "water right" and insert "permit".

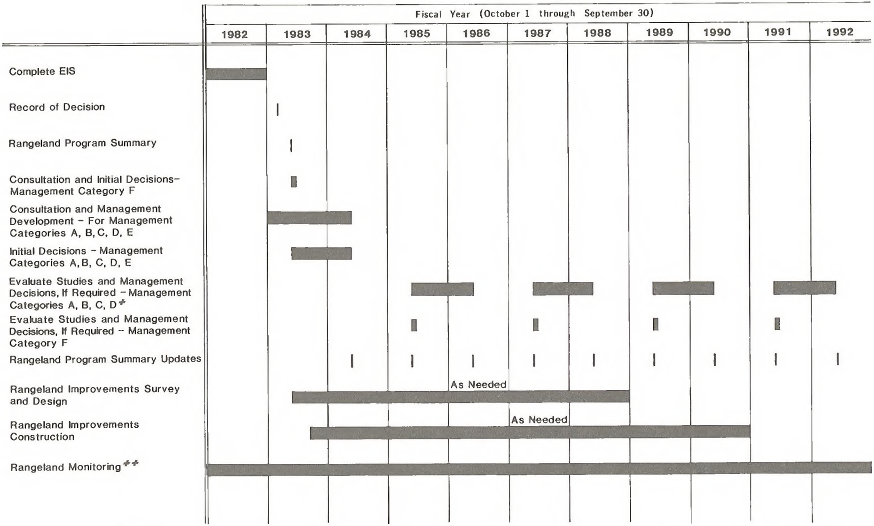
Page II-6, para. 3, line 4. Insert "and approved by" between "with" and "the".

Page III-29, para. 3, lines 1 and 2. Delete "is currently not found" and insert "has been observed but not officially verified".

MODIFICATIONS AND ADDITIONS

Where significant changes have been identified, the entire page has been reprinted. Additional information received during the public review process is presented, as well. The following modifications and additions are to be incorporated into the Draft EIS.

FIGURE I-2. Implementation, Management Development, and Evaluation Schedule for the Preferred Alternative



*E Category Allotments would be regrouped with B Category following consultation.

**Includes Wildlife Habitat Monitoring

Source: BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS Files

Wildlife Habitat Monitoring Program

The BLM Socorro District current wildlife habitat monitoring program consists of the following types of studies. These studies would be applicable to all alternatives discussed in the Chapter. All studies would be conducted either annually or biannually and would provide line management adequate data upon which to base decisions.

Habitat condition and trend will be monitored by conducting 3 foot by 3 foot photo plot studies, point quadrat method (collecting point, cover, and density data), and browse utilization transects. Wildlife species utilization studies of various habitats would consist of continuing wintering raptor surveys, small mammal trapping transects, bird count transects, aerial antelope fawning areas and antelope distribution surveys, big game fecal analysis studies, mule deer pellet group transects, mule deer and elk wintering area surveys and wetland/riparian habitat studies.

Implementation, Management Development, and Evaluation Schedule

By December 1, 1982, a Record of Decision will be published announcing and explaining the BLM Socorro District Manager's decision to approve one of the four alternatives under consideration, or combinations thereof, analyzed within this EIS. Within five months following completion of this EIS (by March 1, 1983), an RPS would be published outlining the consultation, management development, and decision schedule for each allotment (Figure I-2).

Initial decisions would be issued on allotments in Management Category F immediately following approval of the RPS. These decisions would contain the initial stocking rates for those allotments based on recommendations made in the planning documents and analyzed in the EIS. The planning documents state that initial stocking rates would not exceed grazing preference.

The consultation and management development process for allotments in Management Categories A, B, C, D, and E would begin following filing of the Final EIS with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Initial decisions for allotments in these management categories would be issued following approval of the RPS. Intensive consultation would be conducted on all allotments for the purpose of developing a comprehensive management plan for the allotment. Decisions would be issued progressively as the management development process is completed.

Rangeland Improvements

Rangeland improvements and vegetative land treatments would be required to achieve the objectives of Alternative 1. Since the level of intensity of grazing management for each allotment has not been determined, it is not specifically known how many or what type of rangeland improvements would be needed. A preliminary list of rangeland

APPENDIX D

Wildlife

March 3, 1849

United States Department of the Interior

IN REPLY REFER TO
1792 (026)

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

District Office
P.O. Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

June 17, 1982

To: Regional Director, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque, New Mexico (SE)

From: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Socorro, New Mexico

Subject: Biological Assessment - West Socorro Rangeland Management Program Draft Environmental Impact Statement

On December 23, 1981, the BLM initiated informal consultation requirements pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, for the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program, Environmental Impact Statement. Our memorandum of that date requested the current list of threatened or endangered animal and plant species that occur within the area encompassed by the subject EIS.

Your response (dated January 22, 1981) to our request contained the following three listed animal species and six candidate plant species as potentially occurring in the vicinity of the Divide Planning Area (DPA).

Listed Species

Black footed ferret - (*Mustela nigripes*)

Peregrine falcon - (*Falco peregrinus*)

Bald Eagle - (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)

Candidate Plant Species

Alium gooddingii

Erigeron hessii

Erigeron rhizomatus

Astragalus accumbens

Pediocactus papyracanthus

Senecio quaerens

Your memorandum of January 22, 1981, also stated that a biological assessment for the purpose of identifying listed and proposed species which are likely to be affected by the proposed action shall be completed within 180 days after receipt of the preceeding species list. The BLM has completed this biological assessment and, based on findings contained in the document, has determined that there will be no affect, resultant from the subject program, on the species which you have listed nor on six additional candidate plant species listed below which also potentially occur within the DPA.

Apacheria chiracahuensis

Cleome multicaulis

Helianthus paradoxus

Rosa stellata

Silene plankii

Silene wrightii

Enclosed is the subject biological assessment; we would appreciate your review of this document. If we do not receive any further correspondence from you concerning this subject, we will assume your concurrence with the findings contained in the biological assessment. If you require additional information, please contact Wayne Ludington or Glenn Sekavec at 505-835-0412 (Comm.) or 474-6280 (FTS).

Edward C Roberts

Edward C. Roberts
Acting District Manager

Enclosure

cc: State Director (931), Bureau of Land Management,
Santa Fe, New Mexico w/Enc.

Biological Assessment
for
West Socorro Rangeland Management Program
Environmental Impact Statement

Prepared by
Wayne Ludington
and
Laird McIntosh

United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Socorro District Office
San Augustine Resource Area

February 1982

Introduction

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Socorro District Office, proposes to implement a rangeland management program on 986,092 acres of public land administered by BLM within the Divide Planning Area (DPA) of the San Augustine Resource Area. A Preferred Alternative and three other alternatives have been developed to improve rangeland management in the DPA. The purpose of the Preferred Alternative is to protect and enhance the soil and vegetative resources of the DPA which provide the foundation for livestock forage, watershed, wildlife habitat, recreation and aesthetics, and commensurate social and economic values.

Description of the Alternatives Including the Preferred Alternative

Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative)

The Preferred Alternative was formulated in conjunction with development of the BLM DPA multiple land-use plan. All 187 grazing allotments within the DPA were evaluated and assigned an average allotment range condition. Each allotment was then placed within one of six management categories depending on range condition and acreage of public land within the allotment. Each of the six management categories possesses inherent management actions based on livestock grazing/management principles. These include season-of-use, distribution of domestic livestock, kind and class of livestock, and numbers of livestock. Each of these management actions has been listed in a priority sequence within each management category. Some management actions would be required during implementation and others would be optional.

Based on the management category in which an allotment has been placed, the BLM Socorro District would implement, at a minimum, those required management actions and possibly optional management actions on all 187 grazing allotments within the DPA. Implementation of management actions by allotment management category would be conducted in conjunction with "careful and considered consultation, cooperation and coordination with the lessees, permittees, and landowners involved..." as required by Section 8 of the Public Rangelands Improvement Act.

In addition, construction of rangeland improvements and vegetative land treatments would be required to implement Alternative 1. These would include, at a minimum, the construction of 47 miles of fence, 65 miles of pipeline, 10 wells, and 27 pit tanks. Vegetative land treatments would be conducted on an estimated maximum 353,320 acres of public land within the DPA. These treatments include mechanical work, herbicide application, and prescribed burning to control pinyon-juniper and rabbitbrush encroachment on a maximum of 299,560 acres; pitting, contour ripping, and contour furrowing on 17,280 acres; and seeding or interseeding 36,480 acres of BLM administered public land within the DPA.

Monitoring of the Preferred Alternative would be conducted to determine the effectiveness of implementing management actions by management category, rangeland improvements and vegetative land treatments. Wildlife habitat monitoring studies would also be simultaneously conducted either annually or biannually to determine wildlife habitat condition, trend, utilization of various habitats and distribution and movement of certain wildlife species.

Alternative 2 (No Action)

Alternative 2 would be the continuation of the current BLM Socorro District rangeland management program. The existing 13 allotments within the DPA with developed Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) and the one Experimental Stewardship Plan (ESP) would continue operation with revisions made, if necessary, based on the results of the monitoring studies. The remaining 173 allotments within the DPA would not be intensively managed. Existing rangeland improvements would be maintained; however, BLM would not construct any new projects except on allotments with existing AMPs or the ESP. Wildlife, watershed, and other resource use improvements would continue to be constructed under current procedures. Livestock operator-built rangeland improvements would be processed under permits as at present.

Alternative 3 (Elimination of Livestock Grazing)

In Alternative 3, all domestic livestock grazing on 986,092 acres of public land administered by BLM within the DPA would be discontinued. No grazing authorizations would be issued and no AMPs would be developed. To ensure that domestic livestock were not grazed on public lands, an estimated 2,554 miles of fence would need to be constructed by the private landowner or State land lessee. The range management program within the DPA would be limited to trespass detection and the processing of trespass cases. No new rangeland improvements would be constructed, and those existing improvements would be maintained by BLM only if required for other resource uses (such as wildlife) and would otherwise be removed.

Alternative 4 (Maximization of Livestock Forage Production)

In Alternative 4, intensive management would be provided on all allotments within the DPA. AMPs would be developed on those 173 allotments currently without such.

In addition to total allotment management, vegetative land treatments would be conducted on an estimated maximum of 545,815 acres of public land. These treatments include controlling pinyon-juniper on 58,238 acres of public land, discing and interseeding 56,159 acres, pitting, ripping, and furrowing 26,746 acres, controlled burning of 363,335 acres, and chemically treating 41,337 acres of public land. Rangeland improvements would be constructed; however, the type, number, and location of these projects are unknown at this time. Project types would be developed simultaneously with the development of AMPs. Rangeland and wildlife habitat monitoring studies would also be conducted to continually assess the effects of total intensive management, vegetative land treatments, and rangeland improvements.

Environmental Consequences of the Alternatives Including the Preferred Alternative

Site-specific Environmental Assessments (EAs) and those Standard Operating Procedures described in Chapter I would mitigate the impacts on Cultural Resources (Alternatives 1, 2, and 4) and Visual Resources. No actions would be taken that would impair wilderness values in designated Wilderness Study Areas. Therefore, these resources are not discussed in detail in this section.

For analysis purposes in this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), short-term impacts are defined as those impacts to the environment that would occur, as the result of implementing any of the alternatives under consideration, through the year 1989. Long-term impacts are those impacts that would occur through the year 2000. Table S-1 illustrates the comparison of impacts of the Preferred Alternative and other alternatives under consideration.

Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative)

In Alternative 1 there would be minimal, localized, short-duration impacts on air quality in the form of smoke generation and fugitive dust.

Sediment yields would be reduced approximately 8 percent in the long term, but would increase slightly in the short term on areas receiving vegetative land treatments. In the short term, wind erosion would increase slightly in areas where vegetation is removed or disturbed; however, in the long term, wind erosion would decrease as vegetation is reestablished.

Water runoff would decrease 7 to 23 percent depending upon ground cover, slope, soil type and vegetative type within each watershed. Minor, temporary runoff increases would result from the construction of rangeland improvements but would end with the reestablishment of permanent vegetative ground cover. Water consumption by livestock and big game would increase 21 percent by the year 2000.

In the short term as well as the long term, there would be increases in cover and production of desirable and intermediate forage species.

The diversity of small mammals and summer birds would vary according to the Standard Habitat Site (SHS). Generally speaking, the diversity of small mammals would decrease while the diversity of summer birds would increase.

Deer and antelope numbers would increase from 2,200 and 600 to 4,500 and 1,600, respectively. Wintering elk numbers would increase to 100 animals in the long term.

Federally listed endangered species would not be affected by the Preferred Alternative. Baird's sparrow (State Listed: Endangered, Group II) would benefit through the increased availability of grass seed.

Anticipated domestic livestock forage allocation would increase from the current level of 141,600 AUMs to 178,200 AUMs by the year 2000; this would meet the anticipated demand for AUMs produced on public land. The Preferred Alternative would increase big game allocation from the current required level of 4,758 to 9,949 AUMs by the year 2000. This increase in AUMs would provide all forage necessary to sustain big game numbers within the DPA.

Some damage to cultural resources would continue because of livestock trampling, but site-specificity difficulties inherent in assessing damage to archaeological resources preclude exact evaluation of losses. Impacts to known resources or resources discovered during resource clearances of rangeland improvements or vegetative land treatments would be mitigated or prevented prior to conducting such projects on a site-specific basis.

As vegetative cover increases on rangelands, visual quality and variety would improve.

With the improvement of wildlife habitat, hunting would improve. Increases in regional population would be expected to create additional deer hunting pressure. Deer hunting visitor days would increase from the current level of 4,164 to approximately 8,550 by the year 2000.

The existing social environment and the quality of life conditions would be maintained and, in the long term, would gradually be improved. This alternative would ensure continuance of ranching as a life-style, the stability of the family institution, and the community structure would be enhanced. As management actions were taken, the aesthetic values of the environment would be increased through improved range conditions and maintenance of wildlife habitat; the recreational opportunities would be increased as the result.

Livestock operators' personal income would increase under the Preferred Alternative. Their ability to borrow money using their authorized grazing use on Federal lands as collateral would also increase.

Alternative 2 (No Action)

Air quality impacts, consisting of smoke and fugitive dust generation, would be minimal, localized, and of short duration.

Sediment yields and wind erosion susceptibility would not measurably change from present existing conditions.

There would be little or no change in vegetative cover or in production of all plant species.

Small mammal and summer bird diversity would remain stable within the DPA. Big game populations would remain stable but at a level far below optimum numbers. Very little change from current condition would occur to wildlife habitat (Table III-5).

In the No Action Alternative, domestic livestock forage allocation would increase at an estimated constant rate of 200 AUMs per year from the current level of 141,600 AUMs to 145,000 AUMs by the year 2000. Forage allocation to wildlife would remain constant at the current level of 4,758 AUMs throughout the year 2000. Federal grazing preference would remain at 153,406 AUMs. Fourteen allotments would continue to be intensively managed under AMPs and an ESP while the remaining 173 allotments would not be intensively managed.

Some minor damage to cultural resources, because of livestock trampling, would continue at the present rate.

Deer hunting visitor days would remain near the present level of 4,164.

The social environment and the quality of life conditions would change very little. The life-styles, the family institution, and the community structure would remain much the same.

Management actions for the increase of wildlife would be conducted solely in conjunction with the wildlife program. The opportunities for recreational experience, aesthetic viewing and existence values would not change, but demand would continue to increase in proportion to population growth.

Established economic trends would continue in Alternative 2. Any changes that would occur would not be due to factors related to Alternative 2.

Alternative 3 (Elimination of Livestock Grazing)

Smoke and fugitive dust would have minimal, short-duration impacts on localized portions of the DPA.

There would be an 11-percent decrease in sediment yield in the long term. Wind erosion susceptibility would also decrease in the long term. In the short term, there would not be any significant change in sediment yield or wind erosion susceptibility.

Water runoff would be decreased as much as 19 percent depending upon cover, slope, etc. Consumptive use of water by livestock would cease, making an additional 2,379 acre-feet of water available on public lands for other uses.

Vigor and production of rangeland forage plants would improve.

There would be no competition between livestock and wildlife for forage. Small mammal and summer bird diversities would tend toward those present in a climax vegetative community. Big game numbers would reach optimum numbers faster than under Alternative 1. Eliminating livestock grazing would allow grasses to seed out which would in turn benefit the State Endangered (Group II) Baird's sparrow.

All of the 141,600 AUMs presently allocated to livestock use would no longer be available for that purpose. However, all forage allocation would be reserved for other resource uses. All existing rangeland improvements not used for wildlife or other purposes would be removed.

Damage to cultural resources due to livestock trampling would cease. Ongoing historical development as well as the major life-style of the DPA would be, in part, destroyed.

With increases in vegetative cover and production, visual variety, and therefore quality, would also improve.

Alternative 3 would not significantly increase non-hunting recreational opportunities; however, removal of rangeland improvements, that serve no other purpose, and cattle would eliminate existing and potential conflicts between recreational users and livestock operators. Cross-country vehicular access would improve with the removal of fences. This improved cross-country access would be offset, by reduced levels of maintenance on the existing ranch access roads. This would reduce access for all recreational activities. Deer hunting visitor days would increase to approximately 8,550, an increase of 4,386 visitor days over the current level of use.

The social environment and the quality of life would undergo major changes with the elimination of livestock grazing. Sixty-two percent of the livestock operators would have to cease their operations and find employment elsewhere. Most of them would have to compete for jobs in an area already characterized by a higher than State average unemployment rate. Some villages and towns would experience additional demands on an already strained infrastructure.

Income loss would lessen the quality of life of livestock operators as well as businessmen of the area. The DPA is already below the State average in amount of per capita income and median family income.

The stability of the family and community would be altered through spatial movement, uncertainty and anxiety, and changes in the patterns of social interaction.

There would be additional demands upon the infrastructure with the need of additional police, increased public social services and increased urban school population.

Elimination of livestock grazing would have adverse economic effects. Net revenues to all livestock operators using public land would decrease. Livestock operators would be forced to sell their livestock or supplemental feed or graze on private or State lands. Their continued operation would depend upon their prior level of dependency on public lands for grazing and their ability to meet all cash costs after individual adjustments in levels of grazing.

Alternative 4 (Maximization of Livestock Forage Production)

In Alternative 4, there would be minimal, localized, short-duration impacts on the air quality in the form of smoke generation and fugitive dust.

Sediment yields would be reduced approximately 5 percent in the long term. In the short term, there would be an approximate 4-percent increase in sediment yield. Wind erosion susceptibility would increase slightly in the short term in areas where the vegetation is temporarily removed or disturbed. In the long term, as vegetation is reestablished, wind erosion susceptibility would decrease.

Water runoff would decrease 10 to 16 percent depending on cover, etc. Water consumption by livestock and big game would increase 44 percent in the long term.

In the short and long terms, there would be increases in cover and production of desirable and intermediate forage species.

Within the DPA, small mammal diversity would decrease and summer bird diversity would increase. Deer, antelope and elk numbers would increase to 4,500, 1,600, and 100, respectively. Baird's sparrow would benefit from Alternative 4.

AMPs would be developed on 173 allotments and implemented on all allotments. Vegetative land treatments would be performed on an estimated maximum 545,815 acres. Anticipated domestic livestock forage allocation would increase from the current level of 141,600 AUMs to the full DPA potential of 250,000 AUMs by the year 2000. Initial and future forage allocations to big game populations would be 4,758 AUMs and 9,949 AUMs, respectively. This big game allocation would be adequate to sustain those numbers of animals capable of being produced within the DPA.

Damages to cultural resources would continue because of livestock trampling, but difficulties inherent in assessing potential site-specific damage to archaeological resources preclude exact evaluation of losses.

An increase in the number of rangeland improvements, vegetative land treatments, and resulting domestic livestock would increase the potential conflicts between recreational users and livestock operators. Rangeland improvements and vegetative land treatments located near existing and proposed recreation sites would further increase these potential conflicts which would be greatest along the proposed route of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail (the final trail location is unknown at this time).

It is expected that off-road vehicle (ORV) use of areas subject to vegetative land treatment would be restricted while the new vegetation responds, temporarily reducing overall ORV opportunities and reducing recreational access to affected areas. Recreational access would also be restricted by the construction of new fences.

Deer hunting visitor days would increase to approximately 8,550. This represents an increase of 4,386 over the current use level.

The social environment would change very little except for a small increase in population. The quality of life would be enhanced by an increase in income which would provide the opportunity for greater accessibility to goods and services, a decrease in the demand for public services, and a lower unemployment rate. The life-styles of the livestock operators would continue as would the stability of the family and the community structure. Existing patterns of social interaction would continue.

The increased grazing capacities resulting from Alternative 4 would increase the income of the livestock operators and add to the overall well-being of the general economy of the DPA.

Federal and State Endangered Species Potentially Occurring within the Divide Planning Area and Determination of Effect

Federally Listed Animal Species - Endangered

1. Black-Footed Ferret (*Mustela nigripes*) - no affect
2. Peregrine Falcon - (*Falco peregrinus*) - no affect
3. Bald Eagle - (*Haliaeetus leucocephalas*) - no affect

Proposed Species - None

Critical Habitat - None

State Listed (Endangered) Animals

1. Baird's Sparrow - (*Ammodramus bairdii*) - may affect
2. Sonora Mountain Kingsnake - (*Lampropeltis pyromelana pyromelana*) - may affect
3. (Arizona Black) Western Rattlesnake - (*Crotalus viridus cereberus*) - no affect

Federal Candidate Plant Species (as identified by the USFWS)

Allium gooddingii - no affect

Astragalus accumbens - Zuni milkvetch - no affect

Erigeron hessii - no affect

Erigeron rhizomatus - no affect

Pediocactus papyracanthus - Grama-grass cactus - no affect

Senecio quarens - no affect

State Special Concern Element Plant Species

Astragalus kentrophyta var. neomexicana - no affect

Astragalus micromeris - chaco milkvetch - no affect

Castilleja organorum - no affect

Juniperus megalocarpa - no affect

Lilium philadelphicum - no affect

Pteryxia davidsonii - no affect

Thelypodiopsis purpusii - no affect

Wyethia scabra canescens - no affect

In addition, the potential exists for the following Federal candidate plant species to exist within the DPA.

Apacheria chiracahuensis - no affect

Cleome multicaulis - no affect

Helianthus paradoxus - no affect

Rosa stellata - Star Rose - no affect

Silene plankii - no affect

Silene wrightii - no affect

Federal Listed Animal Species-Endangered

Three Federally endangered species have either been observed or have the potential of occurring within the DPA. The potential of their presence and the possibility of any impacts on these species is examined in this Biological Assessment. Methods of assessment include field inventories, literature review, interviews with recognized experts on the species, and analysis of the effects of the alternatives under consideration.

The Standard Operating Procedures, described in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, would reduce any possibility of any proposed action affecting an endangered species. The rangeland improvements and vegetative land treatments proposed in the alternatives would be subject to the following Standard Operating Procedures.

1) A threatened, endangered, State listed, or sensitive species clearance would be conducted by a BLM resource specialist (biologist or botanist) prior to the beginning of any project. If a "may affect" situation is encountered, consultation would be undertaken with the agency [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDG&F), or the New Mexico State Heritate Program (NMSHP)] listing the species which may be affected. The results of the consultation would determine the course of action necessary to avoid adverse effects on listed species.

2) During nesting season, a raptor inventory would be conducted on areas proposed for vegetative land treatment to identify and flag land within a one-quarter mile radius (or as determined through field investigation) of active nests so they would not be disturbed by the proposed treatment.

3) Perennial watering sources would be provided for wildlife at all suitable public land livestock watering facilities.

4) Escape ramps would be required in all water troughs and open storage tanks.

5) Vegetative land treatments would not take place within riparian or other wetland areas. Rangeland improvements would be designed to provide maximum protection or enhancement of these areas.

1. Black-Footed Ferret (*Mustela nigripes*)

This species is probably the rarest mammal in North America. The ferret has probably never been common, but is thought to have declined concurrently with the massive prairie dog eradication programs throughout the west (Snow 1972). In New Mexico, 13 black-footed ferret have been collected and documented since 1899 (Dimas 1980). The last ferret collected in New Mexico was in Lea County in 1954. Since 1969, there have been at least 20 reports of the ferret in New Mexico with various levels of reliability, ranging from "probable misidentification" to "definite" (Conway 1980 pers. comm., Fortenberry 1971). The nocturnal and crepuscular activity pattern of the ferret may partially account for the infrequent observations.

The black-footed ferret is primarily dependent on prairie dogs as a prey base although ground squirrels, invertebrates and reptiles are sometimes utilized (Snow 1972). Prairie dog populations may be increasing in the west as a result of restrictions on the use of poisons on public land. The probable die-offs of prairie dogs from sylvatic plague (Pasturella pestris) may be limiting prairie dog populations in New Mexico.

The Gunnison's (Zuni) prairie dog (Cynomys gunnison zuniesnsis) occurs in the DPA. The exact number of prairie dog towns within the DPA is unknown. It is estimated that at least 50 dog towns are present in the DPA, with one town exceeding 1,200 acres. Egbert (1979) surveyed 483 acres of prairie dog towns in the vicinity of El Malpais. An additional 600 acres of prairie dog towns received a cursory visual survey approximately 40 miles northwest of the town of Quemado (BLM Socorro District Planning/EIS Files). No conclusive evidence of the ferret was found.

Alternative 1 (Preferred Alternative) and the other alternatives would have little impact on prairie dogs and consequently no impact on the black-footed ferret. Alternatives 1, 3, and 4 (Preferred, Elimination of Livestock Grazing, and Maximization of Livestock Forage Production) would result in improved vegetation with a trend toward excellent rangeland condition (as defined by the SCS Range Site Guide). This action will not affect the Gunnison's prairie dog, as the prairie dog is not disturbed by tall vegetation and tends to modify the vegetation within its town through grazing (Stinnett 1981). Alternative 2 (No Action) would not affect vegetation and would have no affect on the prairie dogs.

2. American Peregrine Falcon (Falco peregrinus)

Peregrines are known to nest, winter, and migrate through New Mexico (Hubbard et al. 1979). Preferred nesting habitat usually includes massive cliffs, frequently overlooking water. These areas permit an extensive view of the surrounding countryside (Hickey 1942).

The principal reason for the decline of the peregrine falcon has been attributed to a bioaccumulation of persistent pesticides and their derivatives resulting in reproductive failure and possible acute and sublethal chronic poisoning (Snow 1972). Loss of habitat may be an additional problem for western United States populations.

No peregrines are known to nest in the DPA nor are there any historical records of nesting in this area. Two ground surveys have been conducted within the DPA. El Malpais, located within the DPA was surveyed by Egbert in 1979. The whole DPA was surveyed by LGL in 1980. No evidence of peregrine falcon nesting was observed. LGL (1980) reported the observation of four peregrine falcon in the DPA during the period of August through October of 1979. An aerial survey of potential nesting habitat on April 7, 1980, resulted in no sightings and a determination of nonsuitable habitat, except for the Sawtooth Mountains which had a marginal potential as nesting habitat (Hubbard et al. 1980). The importance of the DPA for wintering and stopover during migration has not been determined.

The Sawtooth Mountains are the only area, within the DPA, that possess potential for nesting peregrine falcon. This area has limited public land (less than 1,000 acres) and that land consists mainly of cliffs. There is little current livestock utilization of the area and there are no plans to alter management. Therefore, it can be stated that there will be no impact to this species in this area.

It is more likely that if the peregrine falcon occurs within the DPA, this occurrence would be migratory. Any of the actions inherent to the alternatives under consideration would have negligible impact on the peregrine falcon's prey base (the small bird population) and on potential roost areas. Since no actions are planned within any potential peregrine falcon nesting habitat and the negligible impact on the prey base, it can be assumed that there will be no impact to this species.

3. Bald Eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus)

The southern United States population of bald eagle has suffered a decline in recent years. This decline has been attributed to habitat loss, poisoning, and reproductive loss resulting from the use of chlorinated hydrocarbons as pesticides (Snow 1973). The breeding population in New Mexico has been historically low and is currently thought to be nonexistent (Hubbard et al. 1979). New Mexico does, however, provide wintering and migration habitat for bald eagle. Pramsteller et al. (unpublished 1980) reported 134 bald eagle as being observed during the 1980 mid-winter bald eagle survey for New Mexico. Most winter observations of bald eagle in New Mexico are in association with perennial streams, rivers, and other water bodies which provide an adequate prey base. However, Connor (1980) estimated 15 to 20 bald eagle to be wintering on upland range sites within the Socorro District.

Four locations have been identified within the DPA that annually contain wintering bald eagle. Public land is found within three of these areas, and contain two identified eagle roosts. The major use period is during the months of January, February, and March. Carrion from dead livestock, rabbits, and ground squirrels is the most likely prey base for these wintering populations.

The identified bald eagle roosts will be isolated and, therefore, protected from disturbance. An area of at least a one-quarter mile radius would be established for protection from disturbance during the bald eagle use period of November through March. All future identified roosts would be protected also. The alternatives would have a minimal impact on the prey species (small mammals and carrion), and would neither increase nor decrease the prey base in a significant amount. The protection of bald eagle roosts and the insignificant impact in prey base would not affect the bald eagle.

State Listed Endangered Animals

1. Baird's Sparrow (Ammodramus bairdii)

The sparrow was once a common grassland species, but its numbers have been declining for the last several years. The Baird's sparrow breeds from Canadian Prairie Provinces southward to North Dakota and adjacent states, and migrates through Great Plains and southwest to winter in Texas, Arizona, and adjacent Mexico (Hubbard et al. 1979). The bird formally migrated throughout most of New Mexico. It is currently found in New Mexico in small numbers and very locally during migration, although winter sightings have been recorded.

This retiring ground sparrow is found in habitats varying from desert grassland, to prairies, and mountain meadows, during migration. Its food consists of seeds and insects, with grass seeds probably being most important (Hubbard et al. 1979).

The reasons for the sparrow's decline are probably related to the effects of drought, agriculture, and grazing where the species breeds. Grazing and drought probably had similar effects on the migration and winter habitat.

The present populations in New Mexico and Arizona are limited to six probable areas (Hubbard pers. comm. 1982). Although there is one unconfirmed observation of Baird's sparrow, it is doubtful that the sparrow occurs within the DPA.

Should the sparrow's population increase, then the Preferred Alternative, Elimination of Livestock Grazing, and Maximization of Livestock Forage Production Alternatives would have a beneficial effect by providing the sparrow with ungrazed mature grass seed heads.

2. Sonoran Mountain Kingsnake (Lampropeltis pyromelana pyromelana)

The range of the subspecies pyromelana, includes Arizona, New Mexico, and Mexico. It occurs peripherally in New Mexico within the counties of Hidalgo, Grants, and Catron. A recent discovery of this snake near Chloride, New Mexico indicated a range extension across the Gila National Forest (Price pers. comm. 1982). It occurs in the mountains from chapparral and pinyon-juniper woodlands upward into pine/fir forests. The snake is generally found in canyon bottoms with grass swales, and near subaquatic vegetation (Hubbard pers. comm. 1982). Food consists of lizards and probably small snakes and mammals.

The kingsnake has not been reported in the DPA, and it is undetermined if the snake's range extends that far north. The higher elevations of Pelona Mountain and Horse Mountain areas may contain suitable habitat and could contain the snake (Price pers. comm. 1982); however, the secretive nature of the snake makes it difficult to determine its presence.

The greatest threat is wanton killing and unnecessary collecting. It is not clear if the snake is suffering from a loss of habitat. The range extension previously mentioned may possibly indicate that this snake is more widely distributed within New Mexico than originally thought.

The livestock grazing management described in the Preferred Alternative, and other alternatives would not impact this snake. Any vegetative land treatments or rangeland improvements that may occur within this snake's habitat would create potential impact. Strict adherence to the Standard Operating Procedures would prevent this impact.

3. The Arizona Black Rattlesnake (*Crotalus viridus cereberus*)

After personal communication with Hubbard (NMDG&F 1982) and Price (New Mexico State University 1982) it has been tentatively determined that this subspecies of snake does not occur within the DPA. The snake occurs in canyons and resulting slopes of the Mogollon Rim, south of the DPA.

Candidate Plant Species

Twelve plants which appear on the Federal candidate species list of threatened, endangered, proposed, and sensitive species occur or may occur in the DPA. There are no Federal listed plants in this group.

The Federal candidate species fall into two classifications. Category one includes those for which there is sufficient information on hand to support the biological appropriateness of their being listed as endangered or threatened, but for which there is not enough data concerning the environmental and economic impacts of listings and designations of critical habitats (U.S. FWS 1980). Category 2 taxa need further biological research and field study to determine the appropriateness of listing.

Methods used in this biological assessment include field inventories, interviews with recognized experts on the species, literature reviews, and analysis of the effects of the alternatives and vegetative treatments/manipulations. Following is an assessment of each plant species. None of these species would be affected by projects and activities when the appropriate clearances are made and mitigating measures are taken according to BLM Standard Operating Procedures. Wherever these plants are encountered, effects of any changes in grazing intensity would be analyzed to determine impacts on populations.

Allium gooddingii - Federal Category 1

This species of onion typically occurs on steep, rocky slopes and moist, shaded canyons in the White Mountains of Arizona (Kearney and Peebles 1951) and the Mogollon Mountains of New Mexico (New Mexico State Heritage Program 1981; Martin and Hutchins 1980). Elevations of occurrence vary from 8,000 to 9,000 feet. The DPA is close to the recorded locations of the plant, and potential habitats may exist, especially on Horse and Pelona Mountains.

Astragalus accumbens - Federal Category 1

Zuni milkvetch, the common name for this species, has been found on Chinle clay in the Fort Wingate area in the Zuni Mountains (Status Reports, U.S. FWS 1978), and in the Datil Mountains. It has also been recorded in the southeast end of the Zuni Mountains near Grants, New Mexico, on public land [BLM Socorro District Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Plant Files]. In this last area, it was encountered on soils derived from sandstone in a pinyon-juniper community in fair ecological range condition. Elevations of the documented populations vary between 6,000 to 8,000 feet. Slopes are usually gentle or level (Socorro District Threatened and Endangered Species Handbook 1981). The plant occurs in barren or lightly disturbed areas and may not compete well with other species (Status Reports, U.S. FWS 1978). Threats to this rare species include potential uranium mining in its habitat. *Astragalus accumbens* has the potential to occur on additional public lands near Grants. The Status Reports indicate that the plant is an increaser on disturbed habitat. Moderate grazing probably does not harm it; however, decreased grazing may allow decreaser species to outcompete the Astragalus.

Erigeron hessii - Federal Category 2 - State Endemic I

Erigeron hessii has been reported on Whitewater Baldy in the Mogollon Mountains at 10,000 feet in crevices of exposed rocks (New Mexico State Heritage Program 1981). Potential habitat and populations may exist on Horse and Pelona Mountains.

Erigeron rhizomatus - Federal Category 1 - State Endemic I

This species occupies a very restricted habitat in west-central New Mexico consisting of steep, barren slopes composed of Chinle shale which is in the process of decaying (Status Reports, U.S. FWS 1978). Elevations of occurrence vary between 7,300 to 8,000 feet. Erigeron rhizomatus is considered an occupant of a primary successional niche and cannot withstand any competition. The edaphic restrictions of the plant are such that they require a soil so inhibitive to other plants, that as soon as conditions allowing other plants to grow are reached, the Erigeron disappears. The only threat to the existence of the species lies in the future development of its habitat area by man, primarily for mining purposes.

A population of Erigeron rhizomatus has been recorded on public land in the Sawtooth Mountain region (BLM Socorro District Files). Additional populations and potential habitats may also be found in the DPA. Due to the steepness of slopes, populations are probably inaccessible to livestock. In addition, the Status Reports indicate the herbage is probably unpalatable to livestock.

Pediocactus papyracanthus - Federal Category 1

Grama grass cactus is found in flat to gentle sloping grassland from below 5,000 to about 7,500 feet (Status Reports, U.S. FWS 1978). The plant prefers good grass cover and carryover and is found intermingled with Bouteloua gracilis, Bouteloua eriopoda, Hilaria jamesii, or Sporobolus spp. Its flat, curled spines mimic these grasses and provide camouflage for protection from predation. Pediocactus papyracanthus was once relatively widespread as indicated by its large range; but overgrazing, collection pressures, and the growth of towns such as Albuquerque have greatly diminished the wild populations and may eventually put the cactus in danger of extinction (Status Reports, U.S. FWS 1978).

Pediocactus papyracanthus has been recorded from a number of locations in Arizona and New Mexico (Status Reports, U.S. FWS 1978), and much potential habitat exists in the DPA. Improved grass cover resulting from grazing management may enhance undiscovered populations. Areas with good grass cover composed of the previously mentioned associated species are probably in good ecological range condition and would not be considered for most of the vegetative manipulations and treatments.

Senecio quarens - Federal Category 2

This plant is known from a small area of the Mogollon Mountains and possibly occurs in the Magdalena Mountains (Status Reports, U.S. FWS 1980). The typical occurrence habitat is meadows at about 8,000 feet along the banks of streams primarily in shade. Since Senecio quarens has a narrow range and delicate habitat, any change in the habitat or heavier use of the area could lead to its extinction. The plant has a small probability of occurring on the DPA, for there are very few suitable streams to provide the proper habitat.

State Special Concern Element Plant Species

Astragalus kentrophyta var. neomexicana - State Endemic I

The red sandstone rimrocks near Gallup, New Mexico are the typical habitat for this species (Paul Knight pers. comm. 1982). It also occurs on gullied bluffs, badlands, and dunes varying from 5,300 to 6,900 feet in northwestern New Mexico (Barneby 1964). The DPA is very near some of the recorded populations, and potential habitats and populations may exist within it.

Astragalus micromeris - State Endemic I

Chaco milkvetch is endemic to northwestern New Mexico and grows on shelving ledges of sandstone cliffs and steep boulder-strewn talus at 6,600 to 7,300 feet (Barneby 1964). Due to the proximity of the DPA to recorded locations for this species, potential habitat and populations may exist there.

Castilleja organorum - State Endemic I

This species is restricted to the Organ and Magdalena Mountains and to the Black Range at 7,000 to 8,000 feet (Martin and Hutchins 1980). Some of these occurrences are close to the DPA, and potential habitats and populations may be present within it.

Juniperus megalocarpa - State Endemic I

This plant has a population occurrence relatively close to the DPA in the San Francisco River Valley. It has been synonymized with Juniperus osteosperma and may not be a distinct taxon (New Mexico State Heritage Program 1981). Juniperus megalocarpa may occur in the DPA in pinyon-juniper woodlands.

Juniperus species are not generally browsed by livestock unless other forage is scarce (Kearney and Peebles 1951).

Lilium philadelphicum - State - Rare

Personal communication with Paul Knight (New Mexico State Heritage Program 1982) indicates Lilium philadelphicum occasionally occurs in woods and may occur throughout the State where conditions are suitable.

Pteryxia davidsonii - State Endemic II

This species is found in moist rocky places in New Mexico and southeastern Arizona at 7,000 to 8,000 feet (Martin and Hutchins 1980). There is a recorded population in the Magdalena Mountains (New Mexico State Heritage Program 1981), and the potential exists for additional populations and habitat in the DPA.

Thelypodiopsis purpusii - State - Rare

This biennial forb is found in low mountains, hills, and igneous canyons in central New Mexico at elevations of 6,500 to 7,500 feet (Martin and Hutchins 1980, Spellenberg 1977). It has been recorded near Polvadera Mountain (on the east side of the Socorro District) near the bottom of a small canyon under oaks in a heavily grazed area (BLM Socorro District T&E Plant Files). Although it did not appear to be utilized by livestock, Spellenberg (1977) speculates it may be grazed due to its growth in early spring when much of the other vegetation is dormant. Potential habitat and populations may exist in the DPA.

Wyethia scabra canescens - State Endemic II

This plant occurs in northwestern New Mexico on red sandstone at elevations of 5,000 to 6,000 feet (Martin and Hutchins 1980; Paul Knight pers. comm. 1982). A recorded occurrence from El Morro (Inscription Rock) is very close to the DPA (New Mexico State Heritage Program 1981), and potential habitat and populations may occur within it.

Additional Federal Candidate Plant Species

Apacheria chiracahuensis - Federal Category 1 - State Endemic II

This small shrub has been recorded in east Red Canyon in the San Mateo Mountains on a steep, north-facing slope consisting of rhyolite and andesite at about 6,000 feet (Paul Knight pers. comm. 1982). It is rare, but potential habitat may exist in igneous areas of the DPA. Populations would probably be inaccessible to livestock.

Cleome multicaulis - Federal Category 2

Martin and Hutchins (1980) state that this plant might be found in western New Mexico on saline soils and alkaline sinks at 4,500 to 7,000 feet. The DPA lies within this region, and there are a number of alkaline playas which may provide potential habitat. Spellenberg (1977) partially attributes the rarity of the species to man's draining of suitable habitats.

Helianthus paradoxus - Federal Category 1

Wet areas are the habitat of this annual sunflower. It has been recorded from Pecos County, Texas, and along the Rio San Juan in Cibola County, New Mexico (Public Service Company of New Mexico 1978). One additional population has been discovered near Roswell, New Mexico (Paul Knight, New Mexico State Heritage Program pers. comm. 1981). Potential habitats which are wet or moist may exist in the DPA, which is relatively close to the Cibola County record. Increased livestock use may cause trampling damage for potential populations. Mitigating measures would be taken to prevent this from occurring.

Rosa stellata - Federal Category 2

Star Rose is found at altitudes of 5,000 to 7,000 feet in southern New Mexico, western Texas, and Arizona on dry, rocky slopes (Martin and Hutchins 1980). Spellenberg (1977) states that the plant is relatively common and was originally listed because of records of excessive damage by browsing and grazing. Threats to populations would include this type of animal use as well as severe disturbance such as complete clearing for recreational development or dwellings (Spellenberg 1977). Slight disturbance seems to provide suitable habitat. The DPA is adjacent to the known range of Rosa stellata, and populations and potential habitats may exist there.

Silene plankii - Federal Category 2 - State Endemic I

Silene plankii grows on igneous cliffs between 6,000 and 7,000 feet in south-central New Mexico and extreme west Texas (Spellenberg 1977). Habitat requirements are quite specific, and destruction of these areas could cause extinctions of populations. The plant has high rock garden potential, and collecting could also affect it. Additional populations and potential habitat might occur in the DPA. Populations would probably be inaccessible for domestic livestock use.

Silene wrightii - Federal Category 1 - State Endemic I

This species grows in rocky crevices on mountain slopes in southwestern New Mexico at about 7,000 feet (Martin and Hutchins 1980). Potential habitat and populations may exist in the DPA, since the recorded locations are close by (New Mexico State Heritage Program 1981). Populations would probably be inaccessible to livestock.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

In addition to the personal knowledge of the authors and resource information available on file at the BLM Socorro District, the following sources were used for this biological assessment. Copies of the published and unpublished materials cited in this assessment are available upon request.

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March 3, 1849

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

POST OFFICE BOX 1306
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO 87103

IN REPLY REFER TO:

SE

July 20, 1982

MEMORANDUM

TO : District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 1219, Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Acting

FROM : Regional Director, Region 2 (SE)

SUBJECT: Biological Assessment of West Socorro Rangeland Management Program

Your memorandum of June 17, 1982, requested that we review the subject biological assessment (BA) in the context of the consultation requirements in Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. Consequently, the Regional Office of Endangered Species has reviewed the BA, and they concur with your conclusion that no federally listed or proposed threatened or endangered species will be affected by the proposed West Socorro Rangeland Management Program.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this biological assessment.

Jerry L. Stegman

IN REPLY REFER TO
1792

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Socorro District
P. O. Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

June 21, 1982

Mr. Harold F. Olson, Director
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
State Capitol
Santa Fe, NM 87503

Dear Mr. Olson:

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U. S. C. 1531-1543) of 1973, the Bureau of Land Management has completed the Biological Assessment for the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program Environmental Impact Statement. Please find a copy of this Assessment enclosed for your information.

As stated on page III-28 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, should we encounter a "may affect" situation during a site specific resource clearance, consultation would then immediately be initiated with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Edward C Roberts

Edward C. Roberts
Acting District Manager

Enclosure

cc: State Director (931), Bureau of
Land Management, Santa Fe, NM
(w/o encl.)

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Socorro District
P. O. Box 1219
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

IN REPLY REFER TO
1792

June 21, 1982

Ms. Kate Wickes, Director
New Mexico State Heritage Program
ATTN: Mr. Bill F. Isaacs
Natural Resources Department
Administrative Services Division
Villagra Building
Santa Fe, NM 87503

Dear Ms. Wickes:

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U. S. C. 1531-1543) of 1973, the Bureau of Land Management has completed the Biological Assessment for the West Socorro Rangeland Management Program Environmental Impact Statement. Please find a copy of this Assessment enclosed for your information.

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Sincerely yours,

Edward C Roberts

Edward C. Roberts
Acting District Manager

Enclosure

cc: State Director (931), Bureau of
Land Management, Santa Fe, NM
(w/o encl.)

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